



Devoted to the Unchangeable Principles of Truth, Justice, Democracy and Religion, and to All That Brings Happiness to Human Beings

Open Letter To Those Who Fear the Catholic Church

We have grown weary of hearing outsiders tell the world all about what is going on in the minds of Catholics, and what they are aiming at in America. Here, from the inside of a Catholic mind, is what we want and are working for.

Gentlemen:

I write to reassure you. The more articulate among you have written and spoken much concerning what seems to you to be the aim of the Catholic Church in America. To you it seems that she is bound and determined to achieve some sort of political power over Americans. As Paul Blanshard expressed it for all of you, you have no quarrel with the purely religious doctrines of Catholics; what you detest and fear is the "power politics" of the Catholic Church. Or, as Dr. Joseph M. Dawson, executive secretary of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs recently phrased it: "In all directions, educational, political, economic and social, Catholic temporal claims are being pushed here." These are only two samples of a hundred I could quote that express your great fear of some secret Catholic plan to rule over America in a temporal way.

1.

I write to reassure you first of all, by stating as simply and as frankly as I can, the real aim of all genuine Catholics in America. Whether I know any-

thing about this may be judged from the fact that I have been a priest for almost 25 years, that I have worked intimately with or under a score of bishops, that I have attended hundreds of meetings in which the plans of the Catholic Church in America have been discussed both broadly and in detail. After I have said what I have to say, you may still call me a liar or a dupe. If you do, I think we can afford to let disinterested bystanders judge between your and my interpretations of the goals that the Catholic Church has set before itself in America.

The aim of the Catholic hierarchy—of bishops, priests, active lay people in America is simply the salvation of immortal souls. That phrase "saving souls" means helping individuals to escape hell and to win happiness forever in heaven. We believe that saving an immortal soul is infinitely more important than becoming wealthy, building skyscrapers, winning wars or elections, and ruling peoples and nations. We believe, without any reservation and with the fullest and most reasoned convictions of our

minds, that Christ came on earth to save souls, that He instituted sacraments to save souls, that He taught doctrines that must be known and believed by those who would save their souls, that He laid down a moral code that must be observed if one is to save his soul, that He founded a Church in which all these requirements for salvation would be made available to the end of time.

We believe, therefore, that it is impossible to be a true Christian, a sincere member of the Catholic Church, to say nothing of a priest or a bishop, without being fired with the desire not only to save one's own soul, but to help to save the souls of as many others as possible. We believe furthermore that the peace of the world and the tranquillity of society depend on the measure in which individuals in the world and society are trying to save their souls.

It seems to me that all the irritation, not to say animosity, you express against the Catholic Church or her leaders arises from the fact that you will not concede this to be her real aim. You insist, instead, on grubbing about for other secret and worldly motives for her conduct. Some of you, like Paul Blanshard, apparently don't believe that there is any such thing as a human soul to be saved, or a heaven to be won by it. You don't believe much in Christ or in anything that He said. Because you yourselves don't believe in these things, you find it hard to believe that Catholics can be sincere in believing in them. And because you yourselves have nothing to work for but secular and temporal goals, you have convinced yourselves that Catholic leaders must be working primarily for such goals too.

Others among you do believe in an everlasting destiny for human beings.

But you have made the means to attain it so subordinate to personal feeling and private judgment and changing circumstances that you are irked and angered by a Church that presents an all-embracing, detailed plan according to which men must save their souls. You react by assuming that there is some other object than the salvation of souls behind the plan.

The truth is, gentlemen, that every teaching, every action, every campaign of the Catholic Church can be proved by irrefutable logic to be essentially connected with this spiritual and supernatural goal alone. Where you pretend to see a plot to seize temporal power, we within the Church see only a desire to save souls. Let us look at a few examples.

You see a scheme devised to train and hold a political following in the fact that Catholics build and maintain their own schools (even while paying for the upkeep of public schools), wherein religious truth is taught as an essential part of the curriculum. To us Catholics, this is merely carrying out the command of Christ: "Go and teach all . . . whatsoever I have commanded you." To us, the salvation of the soul of anyone who has the use of reason depends on his knowing Christ and the important truths Christ taught. To us, the only way in which children can be given an adequate knowledge of Christ and what He taught is in connection with their schooling. There is no conspiracy or ulterior motive in this: Catholic schools exist for the salvation of souls.

You accuse us of a dastardly plot to destroy the public schools because we use our influence as citizens to oppose certain bills prepared in Congress to give federal aid to public schools. Your interpretation is that we want to see the public schools decrease in influence so that we can politically control more

children in our schools. This is nonsense. We are not opposed to necessary federal aid for public schools. We did not and do not ask that federal money be spent on parochial schools. We are opposed only to such federal bills as contain clear provisions of discrimination against Catholic children by, for example, excluding them even from a bus ride to school.

Our logic in this is the same as that above. We are bound to help our children save their souls. For this they need their Catholic schools. A law that could induce them to leave the parochial school, or one that would set a precedent of discrimination that might lead to the suppression of parochial schools, endangers the souls of our children. We are bound in conscience to resist it, as we do. Far from our seeking temporal power by defending our Catholic schools, it can be proved that there are those (are you among them?) who want to suppress all Catholic schools in order that they may have complete temporal power over all children. The shoe is really on the other foot.

Another example. You like to attribute worldly and political motives to the Catholic Church's strict adherence to certain principles of sex morality. You say that she forbids birth-control only because she wants parents to produce more members for her political empire. Here you become very confused and self-contradictory, because you also say that the Catholic Church considers sex evil and would like to suppress it entirely. The truth is that sex-morality is not an arbitrary thing. The truth is that the Catholic Church teaches the only code of sex morality that can save society from chaos. But the most important truth is that God said: "No unclean person shall enter

heaven," and the Catholic Church keeps reiterating the divine and natural law concerning the use of sex primarily to save souls from hell and to lead them to heaven.

One more example. You profess to see an open grasping for power in the fact that the Catholic Bishops of America have set up a Legion of Decency, listing movies that Catholics should not see, and that church law censors and forbids the reading of certain books. Suppression of free speech, free thought, free art, you call it. The truth is that it is merely one more necessary measure for saving souls. Bad movies and bad books inspire bad thoughts and bad desires. Such thoughts and desires either are, or lead to, serious sins. Serious sins keep one out of heaven and are punished in hell. Thus the only purpose of such censorship is not dictatorship over minds but the salvation of souls.

2.

I write to reassure you on another score. It seems to be one of your major fears that we Catholics are planning to make people do what they don't choose to do, that we have strait-jackets, police clubs, and concentration camps all ready to be used when we attain to just a little more power. This is a conclusion drawn from your first false premise, that what we really want, like Hitler or Stalin, is temporal power over people.

But of all the things that should be clear about the Catholic Church, this is about the clearest: that she seeks to influence nobody except through the appeal of truth and the free exercise of a man's will. In so far as the Catholic Church has members, she has men and women who are convinced that she embodies the truth that will save their souls and who choose to obey her in spiritual and moral matters.

It is a strange thing indeed that even

while you are making your speeches and writing your books against what you think to be the evil designs of the Catholic Church, there are thousands of individuals quietly studying her teachings and coming to the conclusion that she represents the truth they need. It is strange that even while you are whipping yourselves into a frenzy of suspicion and hate and fear against her, there are thousands of individuals, some less and some more brilliant than yourselves, bowing their heads before her and with a great sense of conviction and security saying "I believe". It is strange that while you make an argument against the Catholic Church out of her stand on birth-control, or therapeutic abortion, or the education of children, or the censorship of books, there are thousands who, having studied the Church from the inside see each of these points as just one more proof that the whole truth is to be found there. Surely if you were right, the closer people got to the Catholic Church, the more they would hate it and fear it like yourselves. The fact is that the closer they get to it, the more silly you seem to them.

3

I don't know how else to convince you. It seems so foolish to keep on denying the things which you, outsiders, keep telling us are in our minds. You continue to say that we want union of church and state in America. Archbishops, bishops, priests and lay people have said repeatedly that we don't want union of church and state, that we are satisfied with the status religion is given in the constitution and traditions of the United States. But no. According to you, we're pulling a fast one, we're concealing the truth, we're really trying to put the Pope or the hierarchy in the seats of government at Washington.

Politicians, Catholic and non-Catholic,

have suggested to the President that he have a representative at the Vatican. You see in this a conspiracy on the part of the hierarchy to place the President under the Pope's thumb or heel. You would be surprised to learn, if you mingled among us Catholics, how little concerned we are about whether the President has a representative at the Vatican or not. We do discuss, at times, the advantages of this for the President of the United States and his state department. He would have somebody on hand where news of what's going on all over the world pours in daily and hourly. But I've never heard any Catholic, in authority or not, speak about any great advantage this would be to the Pope. Much less have I ever heard it suggested that this would give the Pope any authority over the President or people of the United States.

Enough, then, of denials. The simple fact is that we Catholics have our hands so full trying to save souls that we don't have the time to think up plots for seizing any temporal power. Christ made the work of His bishops and priests a full time job. He commanded them to teach, to preach, to administer the Sacraments, to help the poor and afflicted, to assist the dying and, above all, to offer sacrifice—His Sacrifice and their own little ones added to it—for the sins of the world. In the life of a good priest there isn't time for politics and plots. And if a priest does get into temporal plots and politics he is soon shorn of his authority to act as a priest.

Alas, we are not doing too good a job. There are not enough saints among us. There are too many thousands of people being lost. We too are creatures with a fallen nature, subject to sloth, distraction, inconstancy and spiritual mediocrity. But we are agreed on this: we don't give a hang about achieving any temporal power over people; we do

want Christ to reign over the hearts and minds of all men; through Him we do want to bring salvation, i.e., the hap-

piness of heaven, to all.

Respectfully,
D. F. Miller

For Non-Catholics Only

Confession Abhorred

F. M. Louis

Problem: I might think of becoming a Catholic if it were not for the business of going to confession. I cannot see why anyone should ever have to tell his sins to another human being. Also I have been taught from childhood that confession is a terrible source of scandal and evil. I am perfectly content with my Protestant doctrine that when you have done wrong, it is necessary only to confess your sins to God to be forgiven.

Solution: The all important question in every religious problem or discussion is this: What does God want me to do? Or, what has Christ commanded me to do? Now Catholics find, in the pages of Holy Scripture, that Christ has given to His apostles, bishops and priests the power to forgive sins in His name; in such a way, moreover, that the confession of sins by the penitent is obviously demanded. He said to His apostles (clearly including their successors as bishops and priests because He always spoke of His church as continuing to the end of time): "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John 20:21-23) It would be impossible for any apostle or bishop or priest to exercise the judgment required for forgiving or retaining sins unless the sins were revealed to him by a penitent. We dare not make a fool of our Lord by assuming that He gave such a power to His priests but made its use impossible by not requiring confession on the part of sinners.

It is very natural that one who has been brought up on fictitious stories of terrible crimes associated with and arising from confession should feel a great fear of it, even after its origin is explained. But is it not strange that most of those who tell such stories have never gone to confession, and never associated much with those who did? Speaking for Catholic priests, we can say that they find the hearing of confessions one of their most difficult tasks (one they would never have assumed had not Christ commanded it), yet one of the most consoling of their ministry. Speaking for Catholic people, we can say that confession, far from being a cause of evil, is by far the greatest incentive to virtue, the greatest source of spiritual security, and the most comforting means of unburdening the heart, that even God could have devised. Talk to a few Catholics about it and you will understand what we mean.



Three Minute Instruction

Mistakes About Marriage

There are few subjects on which more mistaken notions are held and handed down by non-Catholics (and even sometimes by Catholics) than that of the Catholic idea of marriage. Some of the mistaken notions one runs across in this matter are the following, with the Catholic doctrine explained:

1. *That marriages between non-Catholics are considered invalid marriages by the Catholic church.* This is not true. The Catholic church teaches that two non-Catholics, whether baptized or not baptized, who without any impediment of the natural law give the proper consent of marriage to each other are validly married. Their children are not illegitimate in the eyes of the Catholic church and their marriage ordinarily binds them for life.

2. *That the marriages of Protestants are "second-class" marriages, or somehow inferior to the marriage of Catholics.* This is not true. The marriage of rightly baptized Protestants is as much a sacrament for them as is the marriage of any Catholic couple.

3. *That a divorced person cannot become a Catholic, or that a divorced Catholic cannot be admitted to the reception of the sacraments.* This is not true. The one thing that may prevent a person from becoming a Catholic, or from receiving the sacraments, is remarriage after a divorce from a valid, sacramental marriage. One who was divorced by his (or her) partner, or who had a bishop's permission to obtain a divorce for grave reasons, or who, having been wrong in seeking a divorce, has repented sincerely and tried to make reparation, may be a Catholic in good standing and receive the sacraments, as long as there is no intention or attempt to marry again.

4. *That divorce and remarriage are not wrong for non-Catholics.* This is not true. Divorce and remarriage are forbidden by the natural law as well as by the explicit words of Jesus Christ. That is why the Catholic church considers a non-Catholic bound to his first lawful spouse as long as that spouse is alive. The only exception to this is that mentioned explicitly by St. Paul in behalf of non-baptized people or pagans, who, on becoming Christians may, under certain circumstances, be declared free from the bond of their pagan marriage.

Much of the prejudice that exists against the Catholic Church springs from ignorance of the truth as explained above. Catholics should know the truth and make it known to others when questions such as these arise.

Bread on the Waters

This is how you learn. You get sour and bitter and disillusioned. Then, if you're lucky, you get jolted into a new appreciation of mercy and charity.

L. G. Miller

YOUNG FATHER SCHWEITZER had been in residence at his newly assigned parish for only a week when he began to add a Hail Mary to his night prayers in honor of St. Martin of Tours.

He had selected this new patron not merely at random, but of set design. St. Mary's, to which he had been sent as assistant, was a downtown parish. Like many such parishes, it covered a section which was somewhat seedy and run-down, containing a collection of transients, floaters, and not to put too fine a point upon it, just plain bums. There were cheap hotels for the transients and several other establishments for which the name of hotel would be a euphemism. The inmates themselves described their two-bits-a-night dormitories as "flop houses" or "flea bags". Even such places as these were beyond the financial means of some of the area residents, who spent their days in taverns and their nights in alley-ways or gutters.

Of these taverns there were at least twenty in the parish limits, and none of them catered to men of distinction, or at least not until an occasional man of d. shed his respectability and joined the other derelicts on skid row.

Such was the neighborhood in which Father Schweitzer had taken up his duties as assistant pastor, and this fact was what brought St. Martin of Tours into the picture.

Father Schweitzer had read that St. Martin of Tours had cut his cloak in

two with a sword, and given half to a wretched beggar, who later turned out to be Christ Himself in disguise. St. Martin, he felt, could help him in his problem of preserving intact a genuine spirit of charity.

It was indeed a test of charity for a priest to walk the streets around St. Mary's. Six times in an average block he would be approached and asked for a contribution.

"Morning, Father. I'm a good Catholic. Can you help me out?"

"I got a job waiting for me out in Waterloo, Iowa, Father, but I ain't got the money to get there."

"Father, I just got out of the sanatorium, and I'm down on my luck. How about a little loan?"

"Father, I wouldn't lie to you, I need some money bad for a new hat."

"I'm hungry, Father. Could you let me have four bits?"

Now Father Schweitzer was a good-hearted young man, and he took seriously the responsibilities of his position. No honest petitioner in need should be turned down, he felt. Moreover, it was not up to him to question the sincerity of the man who asked him for a favor. His charity would not be judged on that basis. Consequently at first, he gave freely of what money he had, and felt badly only when, as frequently happened, he had nothing to give.

An assistant pastor does not, after all, receive much in the way of personal emolument. There were, moreover, a few debts that he was struggling to pay off

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—to the seminary for his education, and to a brother-in-law who had lent him a hundred dollars for a suit of clothes, a hat and some shoes. There was his mother, who lived alone, and had little or nothing beyond her widow's pension. Surely in all justice he had to help her along in whatever way he could.

But it was not, as we have said, these considerations which made him gradually grow wary in his generosity. Rather, it was the very plain realization that nine out of ten of the skid-row inhabitants were half-drunk when they petitioned him, and would undoubtedly use whatever he gave them to deepen their alcoholic haze. Even a dime was enough to doctor up a coke with aspirin.

It was no mere rash judgment which made the young priest come to this conclusion.

"Father, could you spare a quarter? I just got in from Toledo, Ohio, and I haven't eaten a thing all day."

"Haven't you got any relatives in town?"

"Well, I got a brother who lives out in Wellston, but how am I going to get out there if I don't have street-car fare?"

"Here's a dime. You get on a car and go out to see your brother. He'll fix you up."

"Aw, what can I do with a dime, Father."

"I'm sorry, but that's all the money I have on me."

Pausing at the next corner and looking back, the priest saw the erstwhile resident of Toledo disappearing into a particularly disreputable-looking tavern.

"God knows what kind of rot-gut he will consume in that place," the priest thought to himself. "And the question is, how far am I responsible for the further corrosion of his stomach lining?"

As a result of this and a great many similar experiences, it is scarcely to be

wondered at that young Father Schweitzer gradually developed a somewhat cynical attitude towards the practice of charity in general, and this cynicism tended to make him somewhat brusque. Like many a young priest before him, he had come out of the seminary with a somewhat romanticized idea of charity. He had been warned that he would encounter deceit and insincerity, but to be warned about them and to encounter them in actuality are two different things. There are certain lessons about charity that only ripe experience can teach. One of the most important of them is that God uses charity as a channel of grace even into the hearts of the deceitful and the insincere. Not without reason was it said that "charity covers a multitude of sins," and if this refers primarily to the giver, it may in God's providence refer in a special way to the beggar as well.

Perhaps it was because the young priest had not learned this valuable lesson, but was in danger of falling into a completely antiseptic and sterile attitude towards charity, that one bright and warm autumn morning he encountered Indian Joe.

It was on a Monday, and Father Schweitzer was having breakfast after saying the seven o'clock Mass, when the phone rang.

"Can you come right over, Father? Grandmother just had a stroke."

He had secured the holy oils from the sacristy of the church, and hurried down the street to the address given him, which was only a few blocks distant.

Having done what he could for the stricken old lady, he was making his way slowly back to the rectory, when he suddenly found himself face to face with a man whose bleary eyes and red nose betrayed a recent and more than passing interest in strong waters.

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"Morning, Father."

"Hello," said the priest, and made as if to pass by. A feeling of impatience welled up within him, and he determined that this time he would not be taken in.

"Will you help me out, Father? I want something to eat."

He thrust his fact appealingly close to that of the priest. On his breath there was a sour, nauseating aroma of cheap green whiskey.

"Sober up, and then come around and maybe I'll help you," said the priest, as he shouldered his way past the other and continued on his way.

"I'll admit," said his petitioner, keeping pace with him, "that I did have a few drinks. But what's a poor Indian like me going to do?"

There was certainly no denying that the man was in bad shape. His clothes were ragged and dishevelled, and apparently, while he had consumed much liquid internally, nothing of a liquid nature had been applied externally, for the dirt of days or weeks was thick upon him. Harsh and bitter words mounted to the priest's lips, but he bit them off.

"What's your name?" he said.

"My name's Joe, Father."

"Are you a Catholic, Joe?"

"Yes, Father."

"Do you work at it?"

Joe hung his head.

"Not so good, Father."

"Why not, Joe? What's the matter with you?"

"When I was on the reservation I was a good Catholic, Father. Then I came to the city. It's not so easy here, Father. Nobody cares what I do."

"But why did you leave your home on the reservation, Joe?"

"They said there was good jobs in the city."

Father Schweitzer mentally added another black mark to the record of in-

humanity in city life.

"But if I give you money," he said, "what will you do with it?"

"Buy something to eat, Father."

"Sure you won't get something to drink?"

"No, Father."

"Well, I'm going to make sure you don't, Joe. You come with me and I'll get you some food."

For a moment he toyed with the idea of bringing Joe around to the back door of the rectory. Sadie, the housekeeper, had standing orders to provide for transients. But it was still somewhat early, and Sadie was not always in the best of humors at such a time. Besides, he felt moved to try an experiment.

Together, the priest and his companion walked up the street. On the next corner there was a delicatessen store, and in the window were visible some dried, smoked fish. They looked singularly depressing, and their eyes, still intact in the sockets, seemed to regard the world with sadness and reproach.

"That's what I'd like to have, Father," Joe said suddenly, "One of those fish." He pointed to the window as he spoke.

"Okay, Joe. We'll go in and get you one."

Only the presence of the priest allayed the suspicions of the proprietor in regard to Joe, as he wrapped up the fish and handed it over the counter.

"Father," said Joe. "Fish is no good without bread. Will you get me some bread?"

"All right, Joe."

"Get me one of those long loaves, Father." And he pointed to some long, thin loaves on the corner of the counter.

The fish and the bread together cost thirty five cents, and the expenditure reduced the pocket money of the priest to a total of seven cents. But he felt

interested in the whole procedure, and as he stood finally with Joe outside the store, the latter holding under his arm the two brown paper parcels, he looked upon him almost with fondness.

"What are you going to do now, Joe?"

"I'm going into the park and eat, Father. But what will I drink to wash down my fish and bread?" said Joe, looking slyly at the priest. "Won't you give me some money to get something to drink?"

"No, sir, Joe. They have nice clear water in the park. You drink that, and it won't cost you a cent."

"All right, Father," said Joe, meekly.

"And you come and see me this afternoon, Joe."

About ten minutes later young Father Schweitzer was sitting in his room on the second floor of the rectory. There was a blank sheet of paper before him on the desk and he was trying to dredge up a few thoughts which might appropriately be passed on to the sparse membership of the parish Holy Name Society.

His room looked out upon the street in front of the rectory, and his windows were open to let in the warm October air. It was a busy street, with trucks rumbling by interminably and the clanging of street-cars added to the din. All these sounds had become part of his sub-conscious mind, and did not cause too much of a distraction.

Suddenly, however, a different sound amid the noise caused him to sit up straight—a shout, followed by a wild screeching of brakes. As he got to his feet and went to the window, a policeman's whistle pierced the air.

Leaning out the window, he saw that a little crowd was gathering not far up the street, and over their heads, from his second story vantage point, he could see a policeman bending over a prostrate figure on the pavement.

In an instant the young priest was down the stairs, out the front door, and had run to the scene of the accident.

"Hello, Father," said the policeman, whose face betrayed his Irish ancestry. "Here's some work for you, all right. Stand back now," he shouted to the bystanders pressing around, "and give the priest a chance to do his work."

Somehow, Father Schweitzer was not surprised to find that the prostrate figure was that of the Indian he had parted from only a few moments before. Apparently he had not proceeded to the park after all. What he *had* done, the priest would never know. But one thing was sure, Joe had kept his trust. Still clutched tightly in his arm as he lay there were the two brown paper parcels.

"Don't know what you can do for him," the policeman said. "He tried to cross over the street right here in the middle of the block. I saw the whole thing. I think he had a load on, Father, the way he bobbed and weaved. Truck ran right smack into him."

It was quite apparent that Joe was hurt badly. He lay on his back, and his body had a curiously crumpled appearance. Father Schweitzer got down on his knees and bent low so as to whisper into the injured man's ear.

Joe was alive, but breathing in short gasps, and his face had the ashen pallor of one in a state of severe shock. One side of his face had apparently hit the pavement when he had been thrown, and it was a red and raw blotch. His eyes were open, rolling around with the helpless, childlike wonder of the seriously injured.

"Hello, Joe," said the priest. "Remember me?"

With difficulty the prostrate man focussed his vision, and the priest breathed a silent prayer of thanks as the light of recognition came into Joe's

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eyes. No matter what had been his frailties, he was sober enough now to be sorry—that was what counted now.

"Hello, Father," he said. Then he lifted his head and looked around.

"Where am I, Father? What happened to me?"

"You've been hurt, Joe. Maybe you're hurt bad."

"Hurt bad?" With a tremendous effort he tried to sit up, and fell back with a groan.

"I can't move my legs, Father. I'm scared."

"Don't be scared, Joe. Just leave everything to God."

"Leave everything to God?"

"I'm going to hear your confession, Joe. Wouldn't you like that?"

"Yes, Father. Hear my confession."

"All right, Joe. It has been a long time, hasn't it? . . ."

A few moments later, the priest straightened up.

"Here's the ambulance, just pulling

up," said the policeman. "Want to go along, Father?"

"No. I'll go back and get the holy oils, and follow after it. Where will they take him?"

"City hospital, Father."

Together they looked down upon Joe, who lay very quietly now, with eyes closed.

"Do you think he'll make it, Father?"

"I don't believe so. I think his back is broken. But it's all right. The poor fellow is better off like this. By the way, is it all right if I take one of those brown parcels he was carrying?"

"I guess so, Father, seeing you're a priest. What is it?"

"It's a loaf of bread."

The policeman stared.

"What do you want with that?"

"Well," said the priest, softly, as he stooped down and with gentleness took the parcel from Joe, "you see, this is the bread I cast upon the waters—and it came back to me a thousandfold."

Condolence

Benjamin Franklin had a way of saying things with a certain originality. While the following quotation from him is not a full statement on the purpose and meaning of immortality, it is significant considering his background and the watered-down religious ideas amid which he lived. The lines were written to a relative on the death of a brother:

"A man is not completely born until he is dead. Why then should we grieve that a new child is born among the immortals? We are spirits. That bodies should be lent us, while they can afford us pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge or in doing good to our fellow creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God. When they become unfit for these purposes and afford us pain instead of pleasure, instead of an aid become an encumbrance, it is equally kind and benevolent that a way is provided by which we may get rid of them. Death is that way.

"Our friend and we were invited abroad on a party of pleasure which is to last forever. His chair was ready first and he is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together; and why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow and know where to find him."

Pre-Marriage Clinic

D. F. Miller

The Danger of Insanity

Problem: I am unofficially engaged to a young man and am very much in love with him. Only recently, however, I have learned something that has disturbed me greatly. I had thought all along that his mother was dead, and it came as a shock to find out, first by accident from others, and then from himself, that his mother is in an insane asylum. I have always heard that it is very dangerous to marry anyone with insanity in the family. Would it be taking a great risk to marry this man?

Solution: A very important distinction has to be made in judging whether there is danger that insanity may be transmitted from mother to son. If the insanity of the mother is known to have originated in some accidental event, such as a fall, or some organic disease that is not subject to transmission through heredity, or to an unsuccessful operation, then there is little reason to fear that it may reappear in her children. There can be even greater assurance if, added to this evidence, there is no other record of insanity in her family or forebears.

If, however, it is found out that insanity did break out every once in a while in the mother's family; and if in her case there seems to be no definite cause other than a kind of congenital predisposition to mental trouble, there would be some reason to fear the danger of its reoccurrence in the son. Often, however, it is possible to judge with a reasonable amount of certainty how great or small the danger is. Hereditary predisposition to mental breakdown manifests itself often in the form of moodiness, lack of control of emotions, suspiciousness, intense jealousy, a tendency to accuse others of plotting against one, and other unusual quirks and peculiarities. If none of these signs are evident in the temperament or character of a mature man, and are known not to have appeared through his growing years, the danger that he will become a victim of mental instability seems sufficiently remote to be disregarded.

It would be important, however, not to enter marriage with such a person with a lurking or concealed fear that the husband might lose his mind. Such a fear could easily affect the mind of the wife, and would surely be an obstacle to a happy marriage. Once the decision has been made, the future should be faced with perfect confidence in God, and with the knowledge that if you are a good wife, and make your marriage a happy one, you will offset even some disposition to mental trouble on the part of your husband.

Proof Positive in Religion

For the man who asks what constitutes the powerful and universal appeal of the Catholic Church, this is the answer. The normal mind surrenders to such proof positive as this.

E. F. Miller

IF A MAN came up to me and said, "Listen, friend, I'm going to let you in on something. I've finally discovered what the true religion is. From the Bible, of course. I've written it all down here on a piece of paper. People have had religion completely wrong until now. For the first time in the history of the world, or at least since Christ died, folks are going to have a chance to know what's what in their relationship with God. How about joining up? You can become one of the first members of the true religion. . . ."

Or if another man came up to me and said, "I say, Mac, get wise to yourself. Give up this formal religion stuff that has been weighing on you like a stone. It's all wrong. *I've* got the right idea. The only true religion is to have no set religion, that is, churches and all the rest, but merely to lead a good life. Don't kill anybody, don't steal at the point of a gun, and be civic-minded. Contribute to the Red Cross, be kind to animals, take an interest in the public school, and keep an American flag handy for waving whenever a band passes by. Patriotism, honesty and kindness, I mean. That's sound religion. All the rest is bunk. How about joining up? . . ."

I say, if I were so approached, the first thing I would ask these men would be to give me a proof that they were right and that they were not laboring under an hallucination, a fit of megalomania or a pipe dream. In so important a matter I wouldn't want to be misled.

Heaven and hell would be the stakes. Men can make some rather egregious errors when left on their own to figure out the answer to a tricky problem. So, I'd want some heavy proof to substantiate their statements.

The kind of proof I'd want would be proof that came from God rather than from themselves. If they told me that their proof lay in common sense or in their own reasoning power or only in the Bible, I'd say, "Nix, Joe. You've made lots of boners before in other matters when you relied on common sense and your own reasoning ability. How about the business of your supporting the Communists a few years back? They're no different now from what they were then, are they? A zebra doesn't change its stripes merely by the passage of time. Yet, you're against the Communists now. How about those exams you flunked in college? You used your reason and common sense there, didn't you? And you were so sure that you were right in the answers that you gave. But your answers just didn't seem to jibe with the answers in the book and the answers the professors wanted. And how about your switch in conviction as to the meaning of the Bible? You were sure you had it right ten years ago. Now you think that you were wrong ten years ago, that the Bible means something entirely different. How come? No, Joe. Nix on that reason and common sense argument as proof of your newly found religion. Let's have some proof from the One who you say is the

founder of your religion. You aren't the founder yourself, are you? If you say you are, beat it. You're crazy. If God is the founder and you are only the voice, let's hear from God. What say?"

Of course, Joe and his friend would not be able to give any such proof. At least, no other religion that came into existence long after Christ disappeared from the earth has produced proof straight out of heaven. It was always the say-so of some man like Luther or Calvin or John Dewey or a couple of hundred others who all of a sudden discovered that the human race had been in error for a thousand years or more and that they were raised in some mysterious way to set things right.

Only the Catholic Church has produced the proof that comes from God. *She has produced miracles*, thousands of them, starting with Christ in the beginning, and continuing with Christ through the instrumentality of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints down to the present day.

By means of the prayers and services of the Catholic Church people have been cured of cancer, tuberculosis, lupus, gangrene, organic blindness, festering wounds, leprosy — indeed, of almost any and of all diseases that can scourge the human body. Men have had their legs lengthened or shortened when one leg was longer or shorter than the other as a result of accident or illness. Men have been raised from the dead when coroners had declared that they were truly dead and that decomposition was already at work.

These cures were instantaneous and complete. And they were permanent. Else they would not have been miracles in the accepted sense, and could not have been accepted as proofs from God for the truth of the Catholic Church. Nature, it is true, can or will someday

cure cancer and most of the other maladies for which there is no cure now. The sulfa drugs, penicillin, streptomycin and other like specifics have done wonders in the overcoming of pneumonia and venereal disease. Remedies have been found for diphtheria, scarlet fever and typhoid. Even rabies can be curbed and consumption controlled.

But never has science found the secret of *immediate, instantaneous* resurrection from disease. I had pneumonia a few years ago. They gave me sulfadiazine in large doses. In three days my fever had left me. In three weeks I was completely restored to health. *In three days. In three weeks. Notice, not immediately.* I might have died without the sulfa. I did not die because the drug put up a battle with the germs that the germs could not win. I visualized the battle going on within my lungs. I could almost see the germs taking shelter, being hunted down and killed. But it all took time. I was truly cured. It was a fast cure. But again I say that it was not an instantaneous cure. Nature simply cannot work that way.

Nor is there any universal law of nature (as yet undiscovered) operating in the phenomenon of miracles. Almost every miracle comes about in a different way. Some are effected through a terrific pain that seizes the patient, which seems enough to kill him, but instead cures him. Some are wrought by sweeping the patient to his feet from a position of complete paralysis and making him whole again in the split second of his arising. Some are worked while the patient is conscious of what is going on, while others happen without the patient realizing the blessedness of the visitation. Some leave scars like the scars after a healed vaccination, while others leave no scars at all.

The seeds of all this extraordinary rebirth are not to be found in the ordi-

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nary laws of nature. If they were, a certain pattern could be discerned. The law governing them could be studied by the scientists and a prognostication made as to when and how miracles would happen. That's the way it is with all the ordinary laws of nature. Facts are examined and rules drawn up for their recognition whenever they operate. Look to your astronomy, your biology, your meteorology, for the truth of this statement. As things (proved things) were in nature in the beginning, so they are now and so they shall ever be. To which the scientist adds a fervent "Amen."

But not so with miracles. They appear with no apparent law of nature governing them. They are completely independent of one another, and nobody, not even Einstein, can foretell what course they will take. They may duplicate a previous performance. They may act in an entirely different way. The only thing that can be sure is that they cut down germs and sickness like straw before a sickle.

To a man of reason this peculiar and inexplicable (humanly speaking) thwarting of nature's laws can be explained only by the positing of an intelligent Being *above* nature, who *made* nature, and who can *call off* the laws of nature if He so desires for the purpose of showing approval to an institution that is dear to Him. In our case, the Catholic Church. No other explanation is tenable. No other explanation makes sense.

But when it comes to miracles, men of science, men of false religion, and men of no religion are no longer men of reason. They simply cannot bring themselves to accept miracles. They don't even like the sound of the word. They patronize and speak kindly to people who believe in miracles as one might treat a child who recounts the story of a fearful nightmare that was suffered the night before. At times they

will stoop sufficiently to tell the world why they cannot accept miracles, or rather, why miracles do not happen. This is what they say.

1. So-called miracles are often wrought through bathing in a supposedly miraculous water or through drinking or applying this same water to the body. The explanation of cures brought about through such ablutions is simply that the water has curative or therapeutic qualities. Water has always been known to cure from the days of the ancients to the present day. Men are making millions in attestation of the fact.

The trouble with so pat an explanation is the strange peculiarity that water that has produced miracles has been chemically analysed and found to be sterile of all medicinal properties. Besides, every imaginable disease has been cured with the same water, taken in the same amount and merely tasted or touched. Who ever heard of so fantastic a thing? Do the waters of the famous spas cure *everything* from Bright's disease to corroded knee-caps? And do they accomplish their effect with one application, or by merely bringing the patient *near* the water? Of course not. A man would be a fool to say otherwise. Neither then should miraculous water cure any disease and this by only one application, if it is no more than therapeutic water and if there be no Power above the water using it for His own designs. The facts prove that miraculous water cures all kinds of disease and disability, oftentimes with the use of no more than a drop. Of course, it is a big statement to say that it cures every kind of disease. According to the records of cures kept at the famous shrines throughout the world, there is hardly any disease that is not mentioned. These records are open to those who are interested enough to want to see them.

Far from curing disease, some of the

water that has worked miracles should give disease. At Lourdes in southwestern France the baths (the water of which was called forth by the Blessed Virgin from a sandy and rocky soil) are used by many sick people consecutively, without the water being changed for each new bather. Nor are the patients made antiseptic through carbolic acid or listerine before they are submerged. They are dropped into the water, bandages, blood, germs and all. Yet, immediately, after these submergings, the water has been often tested, and even though there were pieces of decayed skin and flesh floating about freely, it has been found to be absolutely free of infectious or contagious agents. It was pure enough to drink without danger of getting sick.

2. A second explanation that doubting Thomases give for miracles is that they are wrought only on neurotics or those suffering from hysteria. There is nothing out of the ordinary in the sudden cure of a neurotic or an hysterical person. Emotional pandemonium on the part of a mob has been known to cause such cures. To say that they are miracles is to be naive and medieval. Science can explain all.

The obvious answer to such ignorance of the facts is a question: Is cancer in the last stage a neurosis? Is a missing bone in a man's body a case of hysteria?

Take the case of Peter de Rudder who lived in a village near Bruges, Belgium, around the turn of the century. Peter was in a bad train accident. The tibia and fibula of one of his legs were so thoroughly fractured that a bystander could hear the splinters of bone rattling against each other. Operations of various kinds were suggested and tried, and all the loose bones were removed. But the large bone that forms the substance of the leg was discovered to be broken in two parts like a stick that has been

snapped apart in the middle, so that the bottom portion was separated at least a full inch from the upper portion. Nothing could be done to bring the two pieces together. The only solution was amputation. But Peter refused permission for the operation. Surgeon after surgeon, both Catholic and pagan, said that the fracture was incurable. Not only was the bone completely separated, but the leg was swimming in pus, and the lower part swung loose like a rag in a wind.

The poor man was almost out of his mind from pain. Finally he decided to go to the famous shrine of the Blessed Virgin at Oostaker in Flanders and put his cause before the surgeons of heaven. He was loaded on the train like a sack of wheat, and the journey began. When he reached the shrine, he was exhausted, for, though the leg was well wrapped, it was discharging streams of blood and matter; and the agony was unbearable. Nevertheless, he began to drag himself around the shrine for the accustomed three visits. After the second trip, he could continue no longer and fell to the ground, at the same time imploring the Virgin to help him. Then he lapsed into unconsciousness.

On coming to himself he found that he was kneeling in front of the statue of the Blessed Virgin (how he got there he did not know), and immediately he arose to his feet cured. The doctors examined him and found no gap between the bones, no blood or pus, no sign that he had ever been injured. He did not even limp, for both legs were now the same length. *In an instant an inch of bone had grown*, filling a place where there had been no bone before; and all in answer to a simple prayer, said in the act of fainting. Was Peter de Rudder's shattered leg a neurosis or merely a nervous breakdown that settled in his leg instead of in his head or in his

hands?

To clinch the answer to the skeptics who put all miraculous cures in the same box with such neuroses as can be cured by natural means, let the children be brought forth. Yvonne Aumatre was *twenty-three months old* when she was healed of a double clubbed-foot. Paul Marcere was *one year old* when he was cured of a double hernia. The baby in the New York or New Jersey hospital was *just born* when the nurse by mistake poured a strong dose of silver nitrate into its eyes. The eyes were destroyed. The application of a relic of Mother Cabrini brought the eyes back immediately as though they had never been touched. And so on. There are hundreds of similar cases. An infant can hardly be a neurotic. Yet infants are cured.

Surely there can be no "mass suggestion" bringing about the cure of infants. Infants are not old enough even to know what people are "thinking" and "suggesting" round about them, much less to be cured of diseases by such "thinking" and "suggesting".

3. A third explanation given by the unbeliever is that miracles are brought about through a kind of psychological faith-healing that was known in the days of the Greeks and Romans and that every religion has practiced with more or less success.

In two words this objection can be done away with. First, there is no evidence that the Greeks and Romans under pagan gods, and that modern false religions ever cured an attested organic disease by faith-healing. And the second word, there have been hundreds cured of incurable organic diseases at Catholic shrines under the wing of the Catholic Church, who had very little faith, or who were unconscious for weeks before the cure took place. If they were cured merely by *believing* that they would be cured (which is the definition

of faith-healing), they did all their believing while they were out of this world and lost amidst the shadows of unconsciousness. There have been others who simply did not want to be cured; but they were cured anyway.

God has left no loophole through which a non-believer can escape. How then does he escape? Why are there so many, even amongst the learned, who do not and will not accept miracles? How is it that some of the people at Fatima who, together with forty or fifty thousand other people, saw the sun go through those frightening and unearthly convolutions on the promise of the Blessed Virgin, try to find a natural explanation afterwards?

This is the answer. If they accept miracles, they have to accept God in His entirety. If they accept God (whom they must believe to be logical), they must accept the Catholic Church. If they accept the Catholic Church, they must give up their successive polygamy which the world calls divorce, their free and easy habits of birth control, usury, cheating labor, indifference to the rugged demands of religion; and if they are Protestants, they must give up their vaunted freedom of deciding personally what God's religion should be instead of letting Him decide the matter Himself.

Who wants to give up these things? They are fun. So, many simply refuse to look at, to examine miracles. They shrug them off as fairy tales, as impossibilities, or dreams. Not two men in a hundred who are unequivocally opposed to miracles can give you the full case history of a single miracle. They don't want to know anything about miracles. Knowledge in this case is embarrassing.

At any rate the Catholic Church has plenty of proof on which her divine origin rests. I do not believe the Cath-

olic Church to be the Church of Christ because the Pope commands me so to believe. I believe it because Christ has proved the fact to me by wonders beyond the scope and power of human genius to perform. Obedience to the Pope in faith and morals is easy after that. I do not believe the Catholic Church to be the Church of God on the simple say-so of men who can be tremendously wrong no matter how bril-

liant they are. I believe it on the miraculous actions of Him who founded the Catholic Church. A man has to be fully blind not to see these miraculous actions. Unfortunately many are blind, perhaps not through their own fault. They are in the need of prayers that a miracle of another order might be worked — the miracle of removing the scales from the eyes of their souls.

When Newspapers Were Young

The Historical Bulletin, in the course of an article on early American newspapers, quotes the following interesting advertisements:

From the *Richmond Enquirer* for January 16, 1816:

Runaway from Patrick M'Dallogh—Whereas my wife, Mrs. Bridget M'Dallogh, is again walked away with herself, and left me with five small children and her poor blind mother, and left nobody else to take care of house and home, and I hear she has taken up with Tim Guigan, the lame fiddler the same that was put in stocks last Easter, for stealing Barney Doody's game Cock. This is to give notice that I will not pay for bite or sup on her account to man or mortal, and that she had better never show the marks of her ten toes near my house again.

Patrick M'Dallogh

P.S. Tim had better keep out of my sight.

From the *New York Herald* for Sept. 26, 1812:

Misfortunes of a Wig and its owner—Out of charity to the unfortunate gentleman who advertised his loss in the *New York Gazette*, we republish his case gratis: The person who took the Wig off the Gentleman's head in Water Street, near the New-Market, last night, will please to leave it at the house of Mr. Smith Place, No. 173 Cherry Street, otherwise his name will be exposed to the public.

Boy Apostle

A friend of ours, a missionary priest, was telling us recently that in the course of a parish mission he had occasion to go over to the sacristy of the church one morning after Mass, and came upon a rather interesting scene.

There were four servers in the sacristy, whose average age was about ten or eleven, and one of the four had the others backed into a corner. The missionary's biretta was on the back of his head and well down over his ears, and in his hand he held the missionary's cross, and as the priest entered, the boy with the cross was flourishing it at his companions, and muttering in a dark voice:

"Repent, or you shall surely die!"

Letter to Washington

Thanks for the Gourds

Superintendent of Documents
Government Printing Office
Washington, D. C.
Dear Sir:

I am in receipt of your recent letter in which you invite my attention to certain up-to-the minute publications issued by your office, and I thank you very kindly for same.

This is the first time in my life that I have been honored with such a communication, and I can only conclude that someone must have suggested my name for your mailing list. If my conclusion is correct, I would certainly like to meet the person who is responsible. If he informed you that my interests lie along the lines of reading you suggest, then he must have an extraordinarily high opinion of my talents, tastes and capabilities. I would like to shake that man's hand, and bask in the glow of his adulation.

The reason for my saying this is the remarkable list of government booklets which, presumably on the advice of my friend, you bring to my attention.

One little folder, for instance, among other titles, lists the following, No. C 13.10:196:

Nomograms for Obtaining Compound Composition of Hydrated Limes from Oxide Analysis

Now I am ashamed to say it, Mr. Superintendent, but I do not even know what is a nomogram. Monograms I know (that's what they give a college boy after a hard year on the football field). Did you perhaps make a mistake and get the letters changed around?

Still, that couldn't be so, either, because what have monograms got to do with hydrated limes? I never heard of

anybody getting a monogram for figuring out a compound composition for oxide analysis. You must have meant what you said, and I'm afraid I must confess that I don't know what you are talking about.

There was another little item on your list that intrigued me a whole lot, namely, No. 81-2:H.Doc.450. This one is entitled:

Report of Activities of National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Problems

I must hang my head in shame once again, Mr. Superintendent, while I confess that I didn't even know there was a National Advisory Council on International etc. But I think it is just great that they are in there dispensing advice right and left in the midst of all those millions and billions of dollars that seem to be floating around the world. Myself, I'm just an ordinary Joe, and when you start getting up there in those high figures, I can maybe see the bushes moving around, but I can't tell very well what's going on.

All I know is that it seems to be an awful lot of money, and I'm glad somebody is advising somebody else on how to spend it.

As for Item No 127.16:950 on your list:

Hydraulic and Excavation Tables,
and the one right after it: No. M5:-8:101:

Color Code for Compressed Gas Cylinders and Pipelines,

you had better not send those on to me because I am afraid they would just lie around the house with last year's issue of the Sears Roebuck catalogue. As a matter of fact, I'm still

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trying to master the first lesson in Handy Household Hints, or Carpentry Self-taught. If I ever get past that first lesson so that I can drive in a nail without bending it, I'll let you know, and maybe you can introduce me to some of the fascinating details in the field of Hydraulics and Compressed Water Pipes.

There is just one title on the list you sent me that I would like to have you forward to me. It is No. A1:9:-1849:

Useful and Ornamental Gourds

You say, in the descriptive leaflet:

"Gourds are easy to cultivate; their foliage makes an excellent screen to hide unsightly objects, their fruits serve many purposes, and they are used ex-

tensively for ornamental and decorative purposes."

You really captured my interest with that paragraph, Mr. Superintendent. Yes sir, raising gourds is just about my speed, and besides, I've got a whole lot of unsightly objects around the house that I'd like to hide; including an old spittoon that grandfather insists on keeping beside his easy chair.

I noticed that you say a catalogue of publications is issued by your office semi-monthly. Will you please put me on the mailing list for same? It is nice to know what the government is doing, even though lots of it I don't begin to understand.

Sincerely yours,
L. G. Miller

Enforcing Reverence

A priest we know who saw considerable experience in the last war told us this story the other day. Seems on one occasion his outfit was assigned to keep guard over some German prisoners who had just been captured.

The priest discovered that among the prisoners was a German priest, and was able to make arrangements for the latter to say Mass late in the afternoon for the prisoners within their enclosure.

Most of the German men assisted at Mass with great respect and devotion. There were, however, a few exceptions. Among the prisoners were some S.S. men—the most fanatical Nazis of all. These men stood off to one side with folded arms and a very noticeable sneer on their faces as the Mass proceeded.

Finally one of the American guards could stand it no longer. He approached one of the S.S. men from the rear and applied his foot with considerable vigor to the latter's posterior.

"Take off yer hat!" growled the American, "Can't you see you're in choich?"

Big Money

A billion dollars sounds like a lot of money, but the following comparisons will make you realize it is even more than you thought. They are from the *Construction Digest*:

A propeller on a pursuit plane travelling 300 miles per hour would turn a billion times if the plane could cruise continuously for a year.

A billion dollar bills laid end to end would encircle the earth four times.

If you made ten trips from New York to Miami, Florida, you would cover the distance of nearly a billion inches.



For Wives and Husbands Only

D. F. Miller

Disillusioned After Marriage

Problem: What recourse is available to the "sucker" who has been tricked into marrying a girl only to find after the ceremony that all she wanted was a home? I was led to believe that the girl I married was very much in love with me. But our married life was anything but pleasant, as my wife showed absolutely no affection towards me or the two children we had. An argument always ensued when she was asked to live up to her obligation as a wife. Eight years ago we separated, and I have made and kept a home for my children. One has graduated from college and the other is in high school. Now my daughter has married, and before long my son will be through school and will go his way too. Must I be condemned to go through life alone because of a condition of which I was unaware? Frankly, I believe my marriage was a fraudulent one because my wife had but one desire—a home and security.

Solution: If there were no God, no soul, no heaven, no redeeming Christ, but only this world for which to live, you would have a very strong, not to say unassailable case. People of no religion rush into second and third and fourth marriages, when the previous one has failed, because they have let themselves believe that their only chance of happiness is in this world. The strange truth is that they don't find happiness even then, which is one of the strong natural proofs of the fact that human beings were not made for perfect happiness in this world.

Your marriage was a valid one, that is sure, even though you were disappointed in your wife's character and personality and love. This same thing happens in hundreds of marriages in varying degrees. Is it not possible that she was disappointed somewhat in you too? It is true that if she refused to do her duty as a wife, she did very wrong, but it is also possible that your reaction to her first refusals intensified the breach between you.

All that is of the past, however. The issue before you now is plain. Almighty God asks that, for the love of His Son Who died for you, and for the sake of the happiness of heaven, you accept your cross of loneliness, receive the sacraments often, and give no thought to a second marriage while your wife is alive. The alternative is to go on pitying yourself, forgetting about God's law and heaven, dreaming of forbidden fruit, until you will sell your immortal soul for a few years of companionship with an unlawful partner. Don't do it, I beg of you for your soul's sake.

Readers Retort

In which readers are invited to express disagreement or comment on articles in *The Liguorian*. Names of correspondents are published only when they give express permission. However, all letters should be signed and address of writer should be given.

Washington, D. C.

"I am a regular subscriber to *The Liguorian* and have been since 1946. At no time have I ever regretted my subscription . . . The recent article regarding the A.B.C. and the ban on Negroes was very commendable. In the August issued you asked secretaries of K. of C. councils to write you concerning their position on the colored. Well, I am not an official but only a member of the K. of C. I was admitted to the 3rd degree in 1946, but I have never seen a colored person in our council. What the official policy is I do not know . . . In Washington there are a number of Catholic War Veteran Posts. Again I do not know what the official policy is, but I have never seen a colored member among the whites. There are segregated colored posts. This is not my idea of Catholic action. . . At the small parish in Maryland which I attend, an effort was made some time ago to reserve seats for the colored with the white members of the Holy Name Society on their Communion Sunday. The suggestion was voted down on the plea that if the colored sat in the front of the church with the Holy Name Society, they would want to move up there at other times, whereas it is traditional in the parish for them to remain in the rear. There is a Holy Name Society for the colored, but some day, with God's help I hope to see one society and one membership.

M. C. T."

It is good to hear from individuals who have the right idea of how Catholics should act toward the colored,

and who, with patience and Christian charity, are working toward that goal. Sideglances in the August issue of THE LIGUORIAN should help to keep their ideals clear and strong.

The editors

Youngstown, Ohio

"How wrong some folks can be! (I am referring to the letter of G.A.D. about Negroes being excluded from the K. of C.) In St. Joseph's parish, Rochester, N.Y., I know of at least five Negroes who participated in all functions held by the K. of C. Also in Grand Rapids, Michigan, I've seen Negroes taking part in various K. of C. functions. I am not a secretary of a K. of C. council, nor even a K. of C. I'm just a little ole housewife.

A. M. L."

No secretaries of K. of C. councils have written to THE LIGUORIAN, as we asked, about their attitude on admitting colored members. But we are happy to have this testimony of a housewife.

The editors

Grand Haven, Michigan

"I'm a new subscriber to *The Liguorian* and it has helped me greatly. In fact, I've said to myself, 'This is tops in a Catholic magazine' . . . However, I could use a little clarification on the subject treated some time ago under the heading 'The Danger of Child-Bearing' . . . I have two children, whom I feel very fortunate to have, but I am RH negative, my husband positive. I have lost three children since my first two were born. This has, of course,

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caused unhappiness: my having to stay in bed for weeks at a time, having other people take care of our children, the whole household upset—all of which would seem worthwhile if anything was accomplished. But I knew all along I had two strikes against me. The point is: this is experience, three times over. What is the solution in such a case?

M. W. G."

Yours is one of those cases in which the agnostic sees only a reason for increasing disbelief in God, but in which we Catholics see a greater and stronger call for complete trust in Him. There are certain truths of which we are sure. One is that not even in circumstances so grave can you think of deliberate contraception or birth-control. (Your confessor may prudently suggest something like the rhythm system.) Another truth is that your future is in God's hands, not in yours, and that, in a matter such as this, human knowledge, even scientific knowledge, does not reach certainly into the future. With expert medical advice, and the use of prayer, you may have confidence in the future. If you face it with loyalty to God's law and trust in His goodness, there will be abundant graces for whatever God may permit. By the way, have you heard of St. Gerard, the Mother's Saint, whose intercession has been powerful in cases like yours? If not, write to The League of St. Gerard, Liguori, Mo., for infor-

mation.

The editors.

Ste. Genevieve, Missouri

"I have never read a Catholic magazine that so directly and truthfully upholds the principles of our faith, especially in regard to the duties of married people. I only wish every married couple I know who purposely practice birth-control could read your articles. They have certainly been a bulwark against temptation for my husband and me. . . .

E. F. P."

Brockton, Massachusetts

"It was my dubious good fortune to be present at a Harvard Law School Forum some time ago as witness to a 'debate' which we might call 'Blanshardism against Catholicism'. The Blanshard broadsides pricked my thin-skinned Catholic sensibilities in that I worked up a sweat and suffered a touch of nausea, but with salutary results for I then considered the first sorrowful mystery of the rosary. The defense of Father Dunne, S.J., although perhaps wasted on a predominantly non and/or anti-Catholic audience, was courageous and I took heart. But it was a much lighter heart in me after I read E. J. Doherty's 'Background of an Anti-Catholic' in the May *Liguorian*. Your background approach points out the complete answer to all sincere Americans against Blanshard's trend towards misunderstanding and prejudice.

R. C. F."

The Turning Point

Hilaire Belloc, in his *Essays of a Catholic*, thus describes the signs that may someday herald the beginning of the conversion of England to the Catholic faith:

"The first sign of victory (if the impossible victory be achieved—the conversion of England) will be, I say, a change of fashion. Long before we may have made it fashionable to be Catholic we may have made it fashionable to sympathize with Catholicism. Long before we have made it fashionable to sympathize with Catholicism, we may have made it fashionable to ridicule anti-Catholic history, anti-Catholic materialism, anti-Catholic morals."



Test of Character (87)

L. M. Merrill

On Honoring One's Parents

Some people manifest a great weakness of character by the manner in which they treat their parents. We are not speaking here of young children, as yet unformed in judgment and character. Nor are we speaking of those completely selfish and vicious persons who have openly turned against their parents. Quite ordinary people, who consider themselves possessed of average virtue and decency, quite often show up as pretty cheap and unlovable by reason of their manner of acting toward their parents.

The fourth commandment, based on a deeply rooted human instinct, says: "Honor thy father and thy mother." Some of the obligations of this commandment do not cease with the end of childhood and adolescence; they continue to the end of life. The fulfillment of these obligations is a sign of mature Christian character and a source of inspiration and delight to all who witness it. But in the following ways sons and daughters often fail against the duties they owe their parents:

1. *By neglect of their parents.* The neglect may be of the small signs of affection that real love should inspire—such as calling on them once in a while, writing letters at fairly regular intervals, giving or sending them token presents on feastdays, etc. Or it may be of more important things, such as failing to assist them in time of dire need when assistance could easily be given; failing to comfort them in sickness or at death. It is not too unusual to come across poor old people, ill-fed and ill-housed, who have prosperous sons and daughters who have abandoned them.

2. *By disrespect.* There are some who speak with great emotion of their love of their parents to others, but who privately make their parents suffer great heartache and pain. They give way to anger against them; bear grudges against them for days; blame them for their lack of education (no fault of theirs), and show openly that they are ashamed of them. Disrespect for parents, shown in any of these ways, is a blot on the character of anyone.

3. *By unreasonable attention.* The opposite extreme of neglect and disrespect toward parents is unreasonable and childish devotion to the detriment of one's primary duties in life. A wife or a husband who would show more attention and love to parents than to partner would be failing against the right order of things and endangering the happiness and stability of their marriage.

Between the extremes of neglect of parents and exaggerated dependence on parents when one has a home of one's own, lies the practice of a reasonable and fond devotion to parents that is the mark of a well-developed Christian character.

Yankee Catholic

It has been said that the greatest all around thinker America has ever produced was Orestes Brownson. Here is an introduction to the typical Yankee who became a towering Catholic.

J. Doherty

IT IS SAID too frequently that this country is Protestant in tradition and hence that Catholics must always be foreigners and misunderstood. This is so plausible as to be irrefutable, but it is not true. Already we can see the shaping up of a distinctly American Catholicism. When the typical Vermont Yankee is a Catholic then the most powerful argument against the Church will no longer be that it is something foreign.

In spite of the fact that European Catholics are accusing us of being too loudly American, patriotism is a virtue and the danger of nationalism can be no greater here than in other countries where the Church has built itself on the culture of the people. At Notre Dame University one of the most famous buildings is called the Brownson House. It is named for Orestes A. Brownson, a Vermont patriot who was at the same time as Yankee and as Catholic as a person can be. Is it fancy alone that makes us see the Notre Dame graduate of the future having much in common with the conservative Vermonter as well as with the saints and Celtic gladiators of other shores?

One does not say, "As Catholic as Vermont," yet there are five times as many Catholics in the Green Mountain State as there are members of the church of the early Puritans, the Congregational. Still less does one say, "As Catholic as a Vermonter," for the typical Vermonter is not Catholic. But Ethan Allen, the Revolutionary leader

of the Green Mountain Boys, is "Mr. Vermont" himself. And who does not know the story of Fannie Allen, his daughter, who became a Catholic and a nun despite her parent's objection? American Catholic heroes like Father Damien of Molokai are practically unknown in the Green Mountain State. Yet Brother Joseph Dutton (Ira before he became a Catholic), who worked with Father Damien as a volunteer helper and after his death administered the leper colony with characteristic New England efficiency, was born in Vermont. His body is there and a chapel has been erected to his memory.

But there is one great, granite-like figure, unreconstructed and imperishable, whom Vermont would fain forget but whom Catholics must never forget. It is Orestes Brownson, who by his own life as much as by his keenly chiseled phrases delineates for us the Catholic patriot of the future, building his supernatural heritage on native Yankee virtue.

No one should think from this that Yankee New England is rapidly turning Catholic. Here on the banks of the Connecticut River the Redemptorist Monastery looks down sunlit stretches of unbelievable beauty between the White and Green Mountains. In the foothills are farm houses where I have found whole families reading the *Revelations of Maria Monk*. This is a completely spurious and obscene book purporting to give the facts about what goes on in convents. A century ago in

England Cardinal Newman gave statistics to prove that the book had the largest circulation in rural United States though even at that time he had complete proof that it was a forgery. When prospective converts have asked for instruction, invariably my visit has been followed by that of the town minister. On the next visit I find them well-stocked with issues of the *Converted Catholic* or, if they are intelligent enough, *American Freedom and Catholic Power*. I have been assured most solemnly by serious young farm matrons that in the nearest large town where there is a convent, babies are drowned regularly in a hidden pool by the nuns.

One of the features of our monastery garden is the statue of the Infant Jesus stretching out his arms to the world. This stands just off the highway. Passing motorists stop during the summer season to visit the Blessed Sacrament and to take photographs. On departing many of them leave contributions at the outdoor shrine. This draws the following comment: "Crazy Catholics throwing money at that idol." For years the baccalaureate service of the town high school had been held in the Protestant churches. We suggested to the authorities that it was a religious service and, to make it non-denominational, it should be held in the high school auditorium, which is ample enough. Violent letters were written to the local weekly newspaper signed by all the ministers in the vicinity and accusing us of trying to take religion out of the school. The Friendship Club, which is actually though unofficially associated with the local churches, invited Mr. Paul Blanshard in to address them. The carefully stated purpose of Mr. Blanshard not to attack the Catholic Faith, but only Catholic politics, had its expected effect. One of the hardy souls

in the high school tried to address the people on tolerance toward Catholics and was immediately greeted with the outspoken remark, "I hate Catholics." All in all it made for an extremely cold winter.

Nevertheless, one must admit that the mistrust of Catholics among Vermonters is singularly without malice. It is rather of a piece with the resentment that is found toward summer visitors who buy up abandoned farms and speak of the local denizens as the "natives". In spite of popular belief, moreover, the Vermonter has never been an ardent church-goer. According to early accounts, the State was settled largely by radicals and blasphemers as well as by the straight-laced Calvinists. One satirist of his own forebears declares that the so-called Democratic White Churches to be found in the center of every Vermont village are in fact controlled in almost every case by a rich deacon who, though outwardly pious, is often a quiet atheist. In any case, from the early religious ferment of Vermont there arose such strange religious vaporings as Mormonism, Millerism, Spiritualism, Christian Science, and a myriad of other kindred and very individualistic religious sects. But if instability was ever a characteristic of the Vermonter it is so no longer, and this is noteworthy also: a Vermonter who becomes a Catholic is a Catholic to stay.

When Orestes Brownson, after making a long journey through strange and arid places, came at length to the delectable mountains of the Catholic Church, a former friend said of him: "Good, Orestes has wrecked everything he ever joined and now he will wreck the Catholic Church."

Admittedly, this would have been a large job even for Brownson. It is my contention that when history some years

hence looks back it will not find a lay figure who has done more for the future of the Church in this country than Orestes Brownson. Like a blacksmith, pounding out his arguments with bold and sinewy strength, this rough giant has left a treasury of perfectly wrought phrases to meet the political problems that must again and again confront the Church. The *Nation Magazine*, which more recently has come to the forefront as an enemy of the Church, said after Brownson's death that had he written on subjects with more popular appeal no writer of the century would enjoy surer posterity. The topics on which he wrote were the Constitution, the philosophy of government, economics, the laboring classes, the church and state, questions of education, questions of theology, etc. These topics are popular enough now and his arguments are as powerful and as new as ever.

The fame of his intellectual restlessness, however, was well earned. Gifted with a most energetic and keen analytical mind and born outside the Church in a completely Protestant village of Vermont, he was like a great bloodhound baying and bellowing as he followed every false scent until he found the right one. This he followed to the end. As a young man he became a Presbyterian minister, but he was brought up short with clear horror against the blank wall of Calvinistic predestination and the total corruptibility of man. He raced in the opposite direction, preaching as a Universalist minister. He snapped up its vague tenets one by one and broke them in the jaws of his logic. He followed another scent called "My Creed" that is his own. He dissociated himself from all mystical and supernatural religion. He was now running free, but in no particular direction, when he was attracted by the clear howling of another great preacher, Doc-

tor Ellery Channing of Boston. He began to run with the pack from Boston, the Unitarian intellectuals; first with Channing and Thoreau; then with the transcendentalists, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott and with the Ripleys; but Brownson's voice grew too strong and insistent for them. He chased them with his unanswerable logic down the blind alleys of their musings. Disgusted, he ran away from them and found himself in the dark forest of agnosticism, lost without God.

He ran again in the direction of God on the strength of a notion of "the Church of the future." He had a great vision, a shining, new synthesis of all religious truth, and was so intense about it that many others followed him.

The most fundamental principle of this new religion was that it should direct society toward the most rapid possible betterment of the lot of the poorest classes. Brownson's voice was heard now not only in religious circles, but in the fields of government. His was the most powerful voice in the Democratic Party. But when he came forth with his "Essay on the Class Struggle," he scared away all his followers and found himself alone. This was the most powerful essay on the class struggle ever written in this country, though so strong and clear and uncompromising that it almost wrecked the Democratic Party. The new scent was false, Brownson saw, because it placed faith in man rather than in God. He lost interest in reform and began to think of salvation and yearned for holiness. A young minister, Theodore Parker, began to preach Brownson's own sermons and upon going to hear him, Orestes became alarmed at his own words. Man needed something more than his own reason in order to commune with God. He needed a mediator. That was the correct scent which, once

found, led Brownson into the Church. His progress could be traced step by step as with inexorable logic he examined the truths of Christianity.

He began by writing the *Mediatorial Life of Jesus*. This led him to the doors of the Church. Brownson recorded the steps of his progress by a series of articles he wrote for a Protestant magazine, the *Christian World*, on the Mission of Jesus. Without seeing clearly where it would lead him, Brownson simply wished to draw attention to the Church as the means God uses to redeem mankind. According to Orestes later, the first and second essays pleased his Unitarian friends. The third drew warm approval from a Puritan journal. The fourth threw American Tractarians into ecstasies, and the *New York Churchman* announced that a new era had dawned in the Puritan city of Boston. The fifth, sixth and seventh essays attracted the notice of Catholic journals, and the eighth the publisher of the *Christian World* refused to insert. In the words of Arthur M. Schlesinger, his biographer, "Brownson found himself led by invincible logic to assert the Catholic Church as the Living Body of Christ."

After his conversion, it may be asked, did the lion lie down with the lamb? Hardly. It would have been unfortunate for the Church if it had, for it is enough to read Brownson's searching writings after his entry into the Church to realize how crass is the lie that the Catholic Faith fetters the intellect.

It was not the character of Orestes Brownson to enter into the Church noiselessly either. Whithersoever he had come, others had followed him. He now set up an insistent cry that they should follow him into the Church. First, his own family drew his attention. His biographer remarked cynically that Sally, his dutiful wife, after twenty years

of married life, knew the futility of opposing her stern husband, but she found deep consolation in her new faith and never regretted her conversion. His children were young and easily followed their father, all except Orestes, Jr., who had entered the Navy and was away. From a safe distance he at first opposed his father, but by the end of the year he, too, was a Catholic. To oppose the trip-hammer logic of Brownson was hazardous at any time, but when he was fired with apostolic zeal it was a positive physical hazard. A Washington Street bookstore in Boston became the scene where almost daily Brownson would hold forth on the Catholic Faith before all comers. Here on one occasion a former acquaintance began to berate Brownson with great vehemence for becoming a Catholic. He suddenly found himself caught by the coat collar by the massive Vermonter, who lifted him up and threatened to throw him over the stove-pipe.

Such tactics are not the best for making converts. Nevertheless, his arguments induced William J. Davis, George Leach, and Sophia Ripley of the famous Brook Farm, to become Catholics and certainly had much to do with the conversion of Isaac Hecker, who later founded the Paulists. Ralph Waldo Emerson he believed to be by far the greatest American writer, but he felt that Emerson would never attain to true stature until he became a Catholic. Hence, through many years he sent repeated appeals to his old friend asking him to give up his vain philosophies and come to grips with the Faith.

Outside the Church those who knew Brownson did not resent these tactics. It is said that his dearest friend, George Ripley, after one session with Brownson, dreamed that night that he was a Catholic and about to make his confession. He suddenly discovered that the priest

was Brownson. "Kneel, my son," said the priest, "and for your penance repeat after me the 58th psalm in the Vulgate." "Oh, Lord," cried the penitent, "my punishment is more than I can bear!" Since Brownson was entirely self-educated, this had reference to his highly Brownsonian pronunciation of Latin.

One antagonist, recognizing with sarcasm the great worth of this convert, suggested that we would soon have a Yankee pope, Orestes the first, by name. This Orestes dismissed with unwonted brevity and humor by pointing out the fact that he was married.

Strangely, it was among Catholics themselves that his writing caused the most disturbance. At this time of great immigration Catholics often felt that they were in America at the sufferance of the Protestants, and many were perfectly content to dream of the past glories in the old country and to let sleeping dogs lie. But Brownson would have none of this. In his able reviews, which he successfully produced, edited, and for which he supplied practically all the copy, he systematically exposed Catholic teaching to the sunlight. From the housetops he preached his keen, uncompromising application of Catholic principles to American life and let the chips fall where they might. At the same time he publicly subjected the teachings of the various Protestant groups to his analysis and reduced them to their several absurdities.

Brownson's ultra-Catholic views disturbed his co-religionists, not only by making many of them feel that they had become too Protestant-minded, but also because they thought his truculence would fan the flames of bigotry. Sure enough, the *Native American* and the *Know-Nothing* movements did arise, but these were inevitable consequences of immigration.

Brownson then did a characteristic thing. In two articles he stripped naked the pretensions of bigotry. It may be added that he gave such lucid arguments against anti-Catholic propaganda as need only be repeated in the face of all subsequent attacks on the Church. But also, with uncompromising honesty, he hammered away at the duty of patriotism. "There is," he wrote, "such a thing as American nationality . . . This is to be considered as settled and assumed as their starting point by all immigrants from foreign countries. They should understand at the outset if they would avoid unpleasant collision that they must ultimately lose their own nationality and become assimilated in general character with the Anglo-American race."

Such sentiments do not seem so extreme to us now and the last attack on the Church proves the soundness of that advice. A century ago the *Native American* movement against Catholicism was really a persecution. Anyone who has studied the snapping at the heels of the Church today by Blanchard, Oxnam and allied bigots will see that it is essentially the same attack. Why has it been so impotent? The simple fact is that it is no longer possible to confuse the sentiment of Catholicism with the sentiment of anti-Americanism. Catholics have become so American that the Church is impervious to such an attack.

Irish and German immigrants, however, were not to be told such things in plain, blunt language at that time and certainly not by a Yankee like Brownson. This is understandable. Such was the thunder of displeased immigrants that an invitation extended from England by Cardinal Newman to Orestes Brownson to occupy the Chair of Philosophy in the projected Dublin University had to be withdrawn.

"I own," said Brownson somewhat sadly to a friend, "that I have lost some of my first fervor with regard to a certain portion of the American Catholic party, . . . but I love the Church more and more every day."

Orestes insisted that the offense which his Catholic friends took was taken in their character as foreigners, not in their character as Catholics.

"But," he admitted, "the misapprehension of our views as it seems to us has been extreme and we can explain it only on the ground that Almighty God has suffered it to remind us that He has His own method of defending His Cause and protecting His children, and to impress upon our hearts what in our pride we were perhaps in danger of forgetting, that His Church does not stand in human policy, human wisdom, human sagacity, human virtue; that He will prosper no policy however wise or just it would otherwise be which might in him who devises and urges it rob God of His glory or render His supernatural providence less visible and striking. He has permitted a momentary delusion to blind and mislead the judgment of our friends for His greater glory and our spiritual good. We bow, therefore, in humble submission and cheerfully kiss the rod that chastises us."

It has been said that Brownson's writings were greater than the man himself. This is very specious since Brownson was preeminently a philosopher. He lived especially to think and express his thought. He lacked those lesser virtues which are not often associated with the Yankee character, tactfulness, gentleness and subtlety of speech. But no one would deny that Orestes Brownson was a completely forthright and honest man. Let his critics prove that those qualities are not more essential to greatness.

In his declining years when his gruff exterior had been mellowed and he was

supported by the contributions of his faithful Catholic friends, the faith of old Orestes became very simple and childlike. He remembered that in his boyhood days in the Calvinistic stronghold of Stockbridge, he had had his own private colloquies with the Infant Jesus and His Blessed Mother. How could he have escaped the Church!

Schlesinger, in *A Pilgrim's Progress*, declared that Orestes is too great to be left to Catholics alone; he is the possession of all Americans. If this be a just claim then he might better be remembered by non-Catholics. Some years ago when a bearded likeness of Brownson was jostled from its pedestal on Riverside Drive in New York by some playful boys, the *New York Times* wrote a human interest article on Orestes Brownson. It confronted its readers with the fact that few of them knew anything about this man whose name, before he became a Catholic, was a household word in American homes. It then proceeded to moralize on the fleetness of fame.

The Vermont Yankee, though he does not forget his heroes, is almost pretentious in his cult of indifference to them. A pilgrimage to the birthplace of Orestes Brownson might lead one first to the charming little village of Plymouth, Vermont. Here a signpost alerts one to the fact that this is the birthplace of Calvin Coolidge. On a scraggly hillside is an unkempt cemetery where the headstones of many Abigails and Ebe-nezers are placed, helter-skelter, in family plots. The Coolidge tribe seems to be the most numerous. Here on one hail-stormy day, while the small family group stood tearfully around and the villagers kept their distance across the road, the body of the most illustrious member of the tribe was lowered into its place. Later the headstone, locally carved, was raised above it. Now in its

line with the others, completely indistinguishable except for the presidential seal, it looks down to the country store where Calvin entered into the presidency. And across the street is the farm where he was born, unchanged today in any perceptible detail.

All towns in Vermont are little towns. The road to Stockbridge leads along a mountain stream shaded on either side. On the righthand side at respectable intervals are picturesque horse troughs. It is necessary to stop at the first close cluster of houses, otherwise one will have passed through the center of the town. But it is almost useless to ask the whereabouts of Brownson's plaque. One must retrace his steps, scanning the hillside opposite the river. Here there are no signs of the houses, long since torn down, which were there in Orestes' childhood. Halfway up the hillside, hidden by the underbrush, you will find the small plaque bearing the name of Orestes Brownson and indicating that this is the spot of his birth. One cannot be sure that this is the exact spot either, for it is said that the Knights

of Columbus, after obtaining an option on the property where the Brownson house stood, were not able to purchase it when their purpose became known. In any case, it is near enough.

"Requiescat in pace," shall we say? No, may he not rest completely, may he come back to us; may he rise redoubtable to do battle for us; may he be rediscovered by scholars, in the voluminous molding volumes that must be in all the complete ecclesiastical libraries of this country. May he, rising from the dust of his writings with the thunder and lightning of his reasoning strike down as of yore all upstart critics of the Faith.

But, even if this does not happen, the resurrection of Orestes Brownson in this country is almost as inevitable as Resurrection itself. When the Yankee becomes more Catholic and the Catholic more Yankee, then he will come into his own, a giant figure on his pedestal of granite, his heart pure gold, his head of bronze, and fists of steel; perhaps, who knows, he may even be the patron saint of Vermont.

"We Are Gathered Here . . ."

During the time that the late Al Smith was running for the Presidency, he stopped off one day at Sing Sing prison to pay one of the regular visits he considered part of his duty as governor of the state of New York.

The warden showed him various parts of the prison, and then led him into a large hall where the convicts had been assembled.

"Now, men," the warden said, "you are going to hear a few words from the governor."

Al was taken by surprise, and never having spoken to convicts before, he was not quite sure just how to begin his speech.

"My fellow citizens," he said, and then suddenly remembered that when a person goes to prison he is no longer a citizen.

"My fellow convicts," he started out again, but this did not sound right either. Finally, in desperation he burst out:

"Well, anyway, I'm glad to see so many of you here."

That brought down the house, and Al laughed as hard as any.

The story is related by *Sunshine Monthly*.

BIBLICAL PROBLEMS (35)

E. A. Mangan

The Serpent and The Woman

Problem: In the new translation of the book of Genesis we read now, chapter 3, verse 15: "He shall crush thy head and you shall lie in wait for his heel", whereas the old English bible read: "She shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." Why the change?

Answer: 1. In general, first of all, the text was changed because "she" and "her heel" are, critically speaking, manifestly wrong. Only the Latin text of the Vulgate, which is St. Jerome's translation, has "she" and "her heel". And whether St. Jerome had this in his original translation or not is, I think, still open to doubt, since he had "he shall crush" and "his heel" in his commentaries on the text. However, the commission which has been working for years to bring the current Latin text as close as possible to what it considers St. Jerome's original translation decided for "she shall crush" and "her heel" in 1926 when the book of Genesis was published.

2. The Greek text reads "he shall crush" and "his heel". This is the reading that the critical Greek text has had from the beginning.

3. The Hebrew text clearly refers the crushing of the head of the serpent to the "seed of the woman" and the serpent "lies in wait for" or "attacks" or "bruises" the heel of the "seed". The Greek text personified the seed, calling it "he".

4. In my opinion the very best English rendering of this verse should be: "It shall crush your head and you shall bruise or attack or (probably the very best rendering) try to bruise its heel." Here are my reasons:

a. In the whole passage, Genesis 3:15, the direct sense or meaning of "woman" and "her seed" is disputed. "Woman" could mean Eve and all women, or Mary alone, or even Eve alone. "Seed" could mean all mankind or all good men, or Christ, or any one of many other modifications of these opinions.

b. Now a translation should be colorless, that is, it should not insinuate any opinion when the sense of the words is not clear. "She" insinuates, as does "her heel", that Mary alone is the woman of the text, and "he" and "his heel" insinuate that Christ alone is the "seed".

"It" and "its heel" are colorless words. "Seed" may be a collection or an individual, and "it" and "its heel" may refer either to a collective noun or to an individual.

It is true that Pope Pius IX, in defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, said that this doctrine was contained in this text of Genesis "in some way". It is still contained even according to the new translation, because any scriptural argument for the Immaculate Conception derived from Genesis 3:15 argues on "enmity" between the woman and the serpent and between her seed and the seed of the serpent.

The Missouri Valley Problem

The security and prosperity of an area covering one-sixth of the United States is dependent on control of the Missouri River. It would seem that only the federal government can do the job.

G. J. Brinkmann

THE MISSOURI BASIN, an area covering one sixth of the nation, is a problem area of America. This great river valley, in addition to a small part in Canada, takes in most of Montana, the Dakotas, eastern Wyoming, a fragment of southwestern Minnesota, extreme western Iowa, all of Nebraska, northeastern Colorado, northern Kansas and western Missouri—in all 529,350 square miles. Through this "valley of strangers" (so called because of its vast unpopulated areas) flows the Missouri River—the common denominator.

It rises further from its sea than any other river in the world—4,221 miles—and is the longest river in North America (the fifth longest in the world)—2,640 miles. It begins at Three Forks, Montana, where the Madison and Gallatin Rivers, which rise in Yellowstone National Park, meet the Jefferson River, which rises on the Montana-Idaho border near the crest of the Rocky Mountains. It flows across Montana, to within 70 miles of Canada, traverses North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Missouri, empties, near Alton, Illinois, into the Mississippi. Its waters drop from an elevation of 8,000 feet at the source of the Jefferson, to 397 feet at the mouth. In its course it touches the life of over 8 million people.

These 8 million people, and their ancestors before them, have battled for three-quarters of a century to hold the land against the ravages of flood and drought, caused by the ever changing course of the untamed and uncontrolled

waterway.

In the areas of the most stable channels the Missouri River flows in several branches, divided by sand bars and the constant tendency of the stream to form what engineers call chutes—fractions of the river which wander off from the main stream. Chutes cut through farmer's cultivated fields and into towns. Sometimes they are minor subdivisions of the river; sometimes they rival the mother stream herself.

The river's meanderings have changed state lines between Missouri and Kansas and between Nebraska and Iowa, where it forms part of the boundary. They have amputated bends, formed new ones as much as 20 miles in length, undermined and by-passed bridges, and left one-time port towns stranded. They have kept waterworks and steam power plants under constant threat of being cut off from water supply by a sudden shift in the channel. They have prevented the construction of many long needed bridges, which could not be financed because of the fear that they might be destroyed by this errant river. Entire towns have been demolished or now find the river flowing on the opposite side from where it had originally flowed.

Floods from the Missouri's ever-swelling waters have caused astonishing amounts of damage over the past century. Since 1940 it has seriously overflowed six times. Since 1900 some 800 people have lost their lives in the floods. Each time it overflows millions of acres of land are covered, with property

losses ranging in the million dollar brackets. It has been the later years that have been the most destructive in the river's history. The 1942-44 stages ran the highest since 1881 and the damage caused by the onrushing waters was estimated at more than \$150,000,000—\$65,000,000 of which was caused in 1943 (\$45,000,000 of the latter figure in farm crops). In 1943 flood waters covered 2,260,000 acres of land.

Droughts also take their toll of human life as well as of live-stock and crops. More than 300,000 farmers have had to vacate the valley to seek pastures in other parts of the country. It has cost the government \$1,246,000,000 to aid those who remained. Erosion is also a money-eating menace just as it was in the Tennessee Valley before the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Each year the river carries more than 100,000,000 tons of valuable earth down stream into the Mississippi River a few miles above St. Louis. Added to these conditions, the Missouri has no suitable navigation channel.

But the errant ways of the mighty waterway and the droughts of the valley are not the only causes for the deplorable state of the Basin. Pioneer farmers, deprived of the necessary experience in handling such a rare type of land, were innocently an associate cause of the poverty and misery that now sweep many sections along the river.

World War I brought tremendously high prices for wheat and corn. Regardless of difficulties and, indeed, for the lack of foresight, farmers throughout the Basin plowed up meadows and planted them with wheat and corn. Instead of restoring to grass the 54,000 acres they had already mistakenly put into farming they added another 35,000. Valuable bluestem and blue gamma grasses were destroyed, and the main-

stay of the soil killed, thus leaving the top soil an easy prey to the prowling Missouri and her flooding waters.

But since 1938, in some sections, farmers, with the help of Soil Conservation Service technicians, have discovered what the soil is good for and what is not good for it.

A silty clay loam which covered a good deal of the Basin area was the No. 1 problem soil. Most of it had lost one fourth to one half of its top soil. The eroding soils need tough plant roots to hold them together while nature has a chance to restore their strength. It was discovered that the Missouri Basin was indeed a potential gold mine of resources if the proper type of crops were grown in the soil.

For example, one farmer used to earn \$4,000 a year from 520 acres of crops. But in 1944 he had only 300 acres in crops and the rest in pasture. That year he earned \$16,000.

But before such an increase in value can be made widespread, the flow of the Missouri must be controlled and a vast irrigation system inaugurated. Before the Missouri can be controlled, however, its course must be made permanent. The pinning down of the river on the face of the landscape involves pioneer engineering. Something is known of the results which will come from certain changes in the course, width and curvature of the river—all types of change necessary for the stabilization of the channel. But much of it is speculation, trial and error, educated guess work.

For over five years the government has been employed in just such speculation. But the condition of the set-up now in progress is not too favorable to insure success for the project. The task is under the care of the Bureau of Reclamation as well as the Army Engineers. They are both working under the

Pick-Sloan Plan, as authorized by President Roosevelt in 1944 when he signed the Flood Control Bill of that year.

The *Pick-Sloan Plan* is actually a compromise between two opposing groups. The Army, under Colonel Lewis Pick's plan, began working primarily for flood control and navigation. The Bureau of Reclamation, on the other hand, began working, under the plan of Wm. G. Sloan, for better irrigation and hydroelectric power systems. The two plans are at cross purposes, indeed. For a thorough study of them clearly reveals a practical contradiction in terms.

To begin with, neither one has for its objective the full development of the Missouri Valley. They are antagonistic, conflicting, neither can possibly approach complete fulfillment. While "Pick" wants a flowing nine-foot deep navigation channel, which would leave only sufficient water for 3,000,000 acres of irrigation, "Sloan" wants to irrigate 4,500,000 acres of land, which of course leaves the navigation channel out of the question. These two plans caused open antagonism in Congress.

In late 1944, President Roosevelt proposed that Congress pass an *MVA* (Missouri Valley Authority) Bill which had then been introduced by Senator James E. Murray of Montana. Modeled somewhat on the *TVA* (Tennessee Valley Authority), it would have replaced both the engineers and the bureau. Fearful of what this would mean, Sloan and Pick decided on an agreement, which they submitted to Congress. Apparently satisfied, Congress passed their compromise Bill (Pick-Sloan Bill) and in the spring of 1946 appropriated the first money for it.

In general it meant that the engineers would work on the main stream, building flood control and navigation dams; while the Bureau would work on the tributaries, constructing irrigation dams.

Both were given a hand in the production of hydro-electric power.

From the very start, Pick-Sloan has been the subject of many heated disputes. Many think that the program was rushed into too quickly, without adequate planning; others oppose it because it does not provide enough hydro-electric power; but its basic weakness is that there certainly is not sufficient water to irrigate upstream and keep the lower channel running at the nine foot depth needed for navigation. It appears rather obvious that the only solution is a "single department comprising all natural resource activities", as was suggested to Congress by the Hoover task force in their report in March last year.

Senator Murray has such a department in view in his *MVA* Bill which is before Congress right now. Under it five directors would administer the program from a headquarters somewhere in the valley. Such an authority would bring organized protection against one-fifth of the nation's most devastating and thoughtless enemies—the flood waters of the Missouri River. It would provide for cheap and efficient electricity which would bring to life a tremendous force of stagnant industry. As a consequence there would be a large increase in employment and better living wages. Farmers, no longer deterred by the fear of floods and erosion, would be encouraged to settle in the valley and thus bring to life one of the most potential gold mines of agriculture the world has ever known. The Missouri Valley can become one of the most valuable life-giving areas of the United States. But before this is possible some unified corporation must set to work to build up where the river has torn down. And it must, indeed, be a government corporation, since no other corporation could possibly be large enough to work

out a complete plan. Besides, if there were such a private corporation, it would tend to become a rather dangerous monopoly, as Pius XI declared in the Encyclical "Forty Years After":

... For certain kinds of property, it is rightly contended, ought to be reserved to the state since they carry with it a dominating power so great that it cannot without danger to the general welfare be entrusted to private individuals.

Marshall Edward Dimock, professor of Political Science at Northwestern University, describes the advantages of the government *corporation* over *other forms of government operation* in the following words:

The corporation is the most effective means yet invented whereby men—and government too—may participate in a side issue, an activity apart from that to which they devote their principle time. This is done by concentrating managerial powers in the hands of *competent* people and giving them free enough rein in finance and management to achieve the desired results. Autonomy is the chief virtue of the corporation. It is the privilege of being left alone so long as you do not overstep the rules laid down for you in advance. Autonomy of management produces unity and requires freedom from outside interference—conditions precedent to the best results in any managerial field.

Proponents of the Pick-Sloan Plan raise objections to the establishment of an MVA. First, they claim that they are doing the job as well as any Authority could do it and decry an MVA as a "superstate" which would not recognize the fact that the states are masters of their own water destinies. But they seem to forget Article 4, Section 3, of the United States Constitu-

tion which prescribes that "congress shall have power to regulate commerce . . . among the several states". And in the "*New River Decision*" in 1940 the United States Supreme Court declared that Congress had control over any river that ran between states even if the river were only deep enough to float a log. Hence it would seem that Congress does have control over the Missouri River.

There are some who condemn an MVA as being opposed to Christian principles and akin to Socialism. Let these lend their ears to the words of Pius XII as he addresses the Italian Christian Workers (March 17, 1945):

Christian associations yield to *nationalization* only in cases where it appears to be required by the common *welfare*; that is, as the only means to repair the abuses or to *avoid the waste of productive forces of the country* . . .

Though negative in wording, it is obvious that the Pope's statement assumes that there are matters in which nationalization is the only adequate solution to a national problem. If "to repair abuses and to avoid the waste of productive forces of a country" are reasons for some kind of nationalization, then the problem of the Missouri Valley Basin in the United States would seem to measure up perfectly to the requirements laid down by the Pope. It is to be feared that the opposition to federal action in the case stems mostly from private utility interests, whose directors always resist any possible competition from the government, regardless of the demands of the common good. The factors of flood control, soil conservation, irrigation potentialities, etc., weigh little with them, if there is a prospect that the government might produce cheap electric power in the

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process of reclaiming the Missouri Valley Basin.

The whole issue is up to Congress. Pope Pius XII, speaking of necessary government action for the common good, gives the members of Congress something to think about in these words:

Undoubtedly, the putting into practice of this doctrine cannot be done in a day. Its realization requires all the wisdom,

perspicacity, and foresight, together with a large amount of common sense and good will. It requires of them, above all, a radical resistance to the temptation of each working for his own advantage at the expense of others, regardless of the nature and form of their participation, or at the expense of the common good. It requires that altruism which only true Christian virtue strengthened by the help and grace of God can inspire.

Phonetics

In her delightful biography, *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers*, Baroness Trapp describes how she wrestled with the English language on first coming to this country from her native Austria.

Determined to learn the language as soon as possible, she armed herself with a notebook and pencil and began to compile a list of English words. Approaching one of her fellow passengers on shipboard she would point to her watch or some other article and ask:

"How you say in English?"

She would then carefully note down the answer in her notebook.

The results were good from a phonetic standpoint, at least. Consulting the book long afterwards, she found such entries as the following:

E Kneiff (a knife)

bjutifull (beautiful)

E Spuhn (a spoon)

Haudjudu (how do you do)

Dscentlmaen (gentlemen)

Denkswerrimatsch (thanks very much)

Tscheild (child)

Haumatsch (how much?)

Manni (many)

Hooatseteim (what's the time?)

Dschuhss (shoes)

Refjudschie (refugee)

Down The Drain

The *Catholic Medical Mission Monthly* has some interesting figures and comparisons having to do with the amount of money spent annually in the United States on gambling in its various forms.

The figures are taken from a report issued by the Citizens' Committee of Massachusetts, Inc., and do not include the money placed in lotteries, raffles and carnival games.

The Committee estimates that the sum spent annually on betting on races, other sporting events, numbers, pools and slot-machines runs anywhere from \$6,800,000,000 to \$21,500,000,000. Next comes off-the-track betting on horses and dogs, with an estimate of between \$3,000,000,000 and \$10,000,000,000. Note these are billions.

By way of comparison, religious and welfare activities take annually \$1,600,000,000, or less than 2 billion.



Thoughts for the Shut-in

L. F. Hyland

For Well-To-Do Shut-Ins

There are special difficulties and dangers to be faced by sick persons who happen to be fairly rich. Our Lord said that riches are always a danger to the soul, and He made no exception in behalf of the souls of rich people who happen to be stricken with lingering illness or disability.

The great danger of riches, both for well and sick persons, consists in the attachment to this world that riches foster. This attachment can grow so strong as to exclude from the mind all thought of the true destiny of every human being, namely, happiness with God in heaven. It can blind one to the value of suffering, as manifested by Christ; it can induce one to give way to complaints, grumblings, self-pity, when the good things of life cannot be enjoyed; it can smother the salutary thought of death; it can distract one from the thought of the deserts of one's sins; it can make health seem more desirable than virtue or growth in holiness.

These dangers are enhanced by the fact that when they are sick, rich people can provide themselves with so much comfort and attention that the world loses little of its attractiveness by reason of their illness. They can obtain the best room in the finest hospital; they can purchase constant attention from doctors and nurses and attendants; they may be fawned upon and catered to by friends who worship their wealth as much when they are sick as when they are well.

A wealthy sick person must therefore take drastic action to overcome the attachment to the pleasant things of life that carries over into illness. He must force himself to think of death and the realities he will have to face after death. He must make every moment of discomfort or pain turn his mind to thoughts of the happiness of heaven, rather than to thoughts of new earthly consolations that can be bought with money. He must be mindful of his past sins and of the price Christ had to pay on the cross for their forgiveness. He must prove his spirit of detachment from his wealth by giving some of it away before death; and by making a will that will give generously to charity and religion after his death.

If he does not do these things, a rich man, even though ill, is in great danger of hearing from God, when he comes to die, these words: "Woe to you rich; for you have had your reward."

America's Real Comedians

Much of the professional humor of America is tired and stale, when it is not suggestive or obscene. But everybody who wants it can have access to those founts of wholesome humor and laughter—the children.

D. J. Corrigan

IN WEBSTER'S dictionary *humor* is defined as the faculty of discovering, expressing or appreciating the ludicrous or the incongruous, etc. Putting that statement in simpler language, we might say that a sense of humor is the ability to be or act funny, or to laugh at some one who is funny.

From the amount of so called humor that is thrown at Americans these days, one would imagine that the entire country should be going about in gales of laughter. But such is not the case. Grandpa reads the funny paper and does not even smile. Mamma sits before the television set as the most vaunted comedians perform, and most of the time she is frowning. Papa decides after busy hours to relax by listening to the radio antics of Jack So-and-so and Fred Whosis, and after five minutes he falls asleep. Audiences half-heartedly and often with frigid politeness applaud the efforts of famous funny men of stage and screen. So often Americans are not amused, but it is not because nobody is trying to amuse them. They have to take what is thrown at them.

The trouble is that most professional humor is stilted, tawdry, tainted. On the stage, and fairly frequently in television, fun-makers are obsessed with the idea that the only thing that is comical is sex and more sex. In consequence, most decent Americans are in danger of falling into the greatest period of boredom since Rip Van Winkle.

I strongly suspect that the only real comedians in the country today are

children. Also, that the only people who really enjoy a good laugh are their parents, when these youngsters strut their stuff on their homely stage, and this despite all the pains and heart-breaks of child-rearing. A short time spent with most little children is usually good for any number of laughs, of the heart-warming kind that linger for a long time in memory.

For one thing, children are funny because they do not copy anyone else. Their words and actions are often comical because they are so unexpected and so absolutely new. Most often their antics are such a mixture of innocence, ignorance and unawareness of consequences that even a cynic must smile. Never consciously do they descend to the unworthy, the ignoble or the impure. On the contrary, their frank, unwitting humor often paints a moral that strikes their elders like a slap in the face. When children begin to grow up and start imitating their seniors, they usually cease to be funny.

Americans do laugh at children: fathers and mothers with joy and love in their eyes, and strangers often with a wistfulness and envy in their hearts. Possibly our children can yet save the humor of the nation—and its soul.

•
The young Negro father, veteran of the navy in World War II, had taken his tiny two and a half year old daughter to Mass. When it was time to receive Holy Communion, he felt that he could not leave the little one alone;

so she trotted along up to the sanctuary rail. She stood there watching while he received, then slowly followed him back to the pew. While he was absorbed in his thanksgiving, he felt a tug on his coat-tail and then heard a sweet little whisper:

"Daddy, I am hungry too."

Undoubtedly the youngster spoke more than she knew, for surely the Saviour was hungry for her too.

Little Margaret Mary had been taken to the church to see her first Christmas crib. Her eyes were all aglow over the figures, the trees and the lights. She was just learning to talk, and loved to repeat the words: "Baby God!" Every afternoon that week she had to see "Baby God."

Some months later her mother took her down to the shopping center of their small southern Ohio town and fitted her out with a pair of new shoes. On the return home the little one insisted on going by way of the parish church, declaring: "Let's show Baby God."

The church was empty, somewhat to the relief of the mother, as her devout little daughter walked straight up the center aisle, shouting all the way: "See, Baby God,—new shoes. See, Baby God,—new shoes."

The reverend uncle had just finished reading a fourth story for the ring of attentive young faces around his arm-chair. With a sigh he put the little book down, cherishing the forlorn hope that by this time they would be tired of listening to tales that they all knew by heart anyway. But he had miscalculated the energy of his miniature audience. "Read us another," shouted the chorus.

In his despair he thought of his breviary—that refuge not only from many

a worldly care but from boresome conversation as well. With a triumphant gleam in his eye, he announced: "Now, you children go out and play. I have to read my office."

But little Donnie stayed behind and with somber eyes asked a question:

"Why do you have to say your office?"

"Because I have to pray."

"Why do you have to pray?"

"Because all priests have to pray."

"Why do all priests have to pray?"

"Well, er—, we have to ask God to be good to all people and help them."

The little fellow thought this over for a moment, and then declared: "I pray too."

So he ran over to a bureau drawer and got out his small rosary. Then as his uncle was halfway through a psalm, the lad came over, knelt down by the chair, and piously began: "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost." After that there was silence, while the boy got to his feet with a satisfied air: "All done praying," he said, as he ran out of the house.

A few days later Donnie was with his elders, and they were talking about cows and the quality of milk produced by each kind. Suddenly the little fellow announced to the group: "Milk don't come from cows."

Some one asked: "Where does milk come from then, Donnie?"

With twinkling eyes the tiny lad replied: "From the milk man!"

In their frank honesty and innocent inconsiderateness of feelings, sometimes much to the embarrassment of parents, children often let the "cat out of the bag." One young mother discovered this recently.

In the neighborhood there dwelt an elderly lady, who would periodically

drop in on this particular family for a visit. In time she came to be spoken of (in her absence) by everyone as the "old woman."

One afternoon the lady was comfortably seated in a parlor chair when another acquaintance, who was also up in years, came in. While the adults were gathered around in conversation, little Patricia bounced into the room, stopped in her tracks, and declared: "Another old lady."

I had broken my arm, and little Kathleen had heard about it. A few days later I was invited to her home, and had just got into an easy chair, with the arm in a splint in a comfortable position. The children came quietly around, as each wanted to see what a broken arm looked like.

Finally Kathleen spoke up, with all the artless sympathy that can come from only the heart of a child: "Did your arm fall off when it broke?"

Three and a half year old Margaret Mary had been disobedient, and finally her mother decided that some real discipline was in order. So she got out a whip, which had been held in reserve as a threat, but had never been used.

"Now, don't whip me, Mommy, please don't."

"Well, will you behave, if I don't whip you?"

There was nothing but silence from the little one.

The mother continued: "It looks as though I am going to have to whip you then."

"No, Mommy, no." Then her daughter looked up with wide-open eyes: "Mommy, if you whip me, there will be some real trouble around here."

But all is not joy and humor in the life of every child. Sometimes tragedy can strike the hearts of children, and

much as fond parents would protect them from every pain and hurt, at times it is impossible. This is particularly true in the case of Negro children.

During its first four or five years a colored child is completely happy, unaware that it is living in a divided world that can sometimes be hostile, unfair and even cruel. For conscientious Negro parents it is quite a task, as their little ones grow up, to acquaint them gradually with the reality of the handicaps of segregated life, before their little minds and souls are seared and crushed by personal, heart-breaking experience.

The Aldriches were a well educated couple who with their two young boys entered the Church a few years back. The father had earned his degree in agriculture in a university of the south, but because of segregation had never been able to use it for a livelihood. So he eventually became a very successful barber. Both he and his wife have endeavored to give their children a wholesome, fair and charitable attitude on the question of race.

A few years ago, when the boys were quite young, Mrs. Aldrich took them down to the levy in St. Louis for their first view of the Mississippi. Naturally they were most interested in the boats and barges, tied at their moorings or plying up and down the water. While they were absorbed in this new adventure, the modern, streamlined *Admiral*, pride of excursion boats, hove into sight.

Little John, Jr., asked: "Can we take a ride on that boat, Mommy?"

"Maybe sometime later," vaguely replied the young colored mother.

"Why couldn't we take a ride today?" persisted the boy.

"Well, we did not come down here prepared to go for a ride."

"Mommy, is it because we are Ne-

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groes that we cannot take a ride?"

For a moment the mother was stumped, as she did not expect that question so soon. But she knew it was time to tell them, tactfully, the truth.

"Yes, boys, it is because we are Negroes. As you grow older, you will find that there are a lot of things that you cannot do because you are Negroes. But you must never let it make you hate people or be bitter. There are

plenty of other ways that you can play and have fun, at home, at school and with your own friends. Besides, a lot of things are changing, and perhaps by the time you grow up you will be able to do a lot of things that Negroes cannot do now."

At that the colored child fell silent, and he did not ask more questions, nor did he smile.

Strenuous Objection

A priest of our acquaintance, visiting the second grade of his school one day, asked the inevitable question:

"How many boys are going to be priests?"

A forest of hands immediately shot up into the air.

"And how many little girls," the priest went on, "are going to be sisters when they grow up?"

Another forest of female hands shot up—but one little girl in the front row kept her hand determinedly down.

"What's the matter, Mary Jane," the priest said. "Every other girl is going to be a sister but you."

"I don't want to be a sister," said Mary Jane, "because I don't want to have my ears cut off."

Welcome, Spirits

The parish was holding a benefit minstrel show, and some of the young ladies were out selling tickets for it.

A certain parishioner, being approached by one of these young ladies, thought to dismiss her by saying:

"I'll be busy that night, but I'll certainly be there in spirit!"

But the young lady was equal to the occasion.

"Fine," she said. "Where would you like to have your spirit sit? The seats are one dollar and two dollars."

Success Story

Behold a boy
Who topped the crest
A college man
Who gave his best.

He studied long
And labored hard
And reached his goal:
He's varsity guard.

LGM

Can a Rich Man Get to Heaven?

Many Americans have been brought up on the idea that to become wealthy is one of the major goals in life. Here Christ explains what wealth may cost them.

R. J. Miller

THE STORY of the rich young man brings out Our Lord's teaching on the danger of riches most clearly, even if most fearfully, of any passage in the Gospel.

This rich young man is the one of whom the Evangelist says:

Jesus, gazing at him, loved him;

and to whom He made a very startling offer, namely that he give away all his wealth to the poor

and you will have treasure in heaven;
and come, follow Me!

But the young man, when he heard this, became downcast and sadly went away;

for he was a very wealthy man.

There is drama and mystery here, in this extraordinary offer, but stark tragedy too. A good-hearted, outstanding, prominent young man (St. Luke calls him "one of the rulers") finds himself the object of very special affection on the part of Jesus Christ. More than that, Christ singles him out by extending to him an invitation offered only to the chosen few.

For such invitations were not given at random by the Human Being. In fact, He was most particular in this regard.

He called unto Him whom He would,

says St. Mark. On a certain occasion, when a man came running after Him saying: "I will follow You anywhere You go," Jesus replied with a marked rebuff:

The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air their nests; but the Son of Man has not whereon to lay His head.

This rich young man, however, did not even have to offer to follow Our Lord; the initiative came in his case from Christ Himself in the form of an affectionate and personal invitation:

Come, follow Me!

Yet he refused the invitation! Instead of firing him with joy, it made him "downcast"; instead of eagerly taking it up, "he sadly went away."

Among the lost opportunities of history, this surely must rank as unique. And even a casual reader of the Holy Gospel is inclined to speculate on what would have happened to him if, instead of refusing, he had accepted the invitation. He might have become another Apostle, like St. Paul; an evangelist, a missionary, a martyr; a saint with a basilica in Rome raised to his memory, and Christian children baptized with his name all over the world and to the end of time.

As it is, he remains the shrouded figure of a downcast, nameless rich man, who "sadly went away" from Jesus Christ and the golden opportunity

of the ages.

And what was the reason for this tragic failure? St. Luke says: "for he was a very wealthy man!" And Our Lord Himself gave terrible emphasis to the same idea. For a moment He watched the young man as he walked away; then He turned and swept His Apostles with a gaze of unusually compelling intensity, and finally spoke in the most solemn terms. This is how the Evangelists describe the scene:

And Jesus, seeing him struck with sadness, looked round intently at His disciples, and said: Believe Me when I tell you: it is hard for a rich man to be able to enter the kingdom of heaven.

And the disciples were startled at His words. But Jesus said again: Children, I repeat it: How hard it is for those who trust in wealth to enter the kingdom of heaven! It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven! But the disciples only marvelled still more, and said to one another: Who then can be saved? But Jesus, looking intently at them, said: With men it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.

Let us analyze this momentous passage of the Holy Gospel.

A young man, whom "Jesus loved", and to whom He had given an extraordinary offer of "treasure in heaven", has just refused the offer and sadly gone away. Jesus watches him go, silent and sad Himself. Then He turns to His Twelve, and first of all bends upon them a gaze of unusual and striking intensity. From one to the other He sweeps the beam of that compelling regard, "looking round intently at His disciples". Of course the eyes and the gaze of the Human Being must have commanding power on all occasions;

but in the present instance there must have been something out of the ordinary in the way He held their attention and seemed to look into their very souls, to cause St. Mark to make special note of the fact in his Gospel. Indeed, there must have been extraordinary attractiveness and power in our Lord's gaze throughout this entire incident. Three times St. Mark, recording the story as he had learned it from St. Peter, calls attention to the way Jesus looked on this occasion. First when the rich young man was kneeling at His feet, "Jesus, gazing at him, loved him". Then, when the young man had gone away, He "looked round intently at His disciples". And later, when they were marveling at the severity of His doctrine on the dangers of wealth, again He "looked intently at them" while He said: "With men it is impossible, but not with God."

Corresponding to this seriousness, this exercise of divine power to fix the attention of men evident in Christ's very aspect, are the words with which He opened His declaration on the danger of earthly wealth. He uses the solemn asseveration or oath which He was accustomed to employ for statements of the greatest importance:

Believe Me when I tell you!

It is obvious here at the very outset that this is going to be no trivial remark of indifferent consequence. The Human Being is not going to drop a few idle words in a careless or absent-minded moment. Here, if ever, Jesus Christ means what He says. And what He says is this:

It is hard for a rich man to be able to enter the kingdom of heaven.

The reaction of the Apostles to this

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stern declaration is exactly what our own might have been if we were in their place. They were "startled"; and indeed, well they might be. Did the Lord mean that this excellent young man, with his charming good-heartedness, his social prominence and respectability, had forfeited his chances for heaven in that fateful moment when he became downcast and sadly went away? And what about the other wealthy friends of the Lord? What about the good women of wealth, who even at that moment were following Him and the Twelve, "ministering to them out of their means"? What about Chuza, Herod's prime minister, who had been converted with his whole household? What about the rich centurion of Capernaum, of whom the Lord had said Himself: "I have not found faith like this in Israel"?

Jesus saw their bewilderment and surprise, and spoke again. "Children," He said: and we might almost expect some gentle softening of the hard doctrine He has just taught from this unusually tender beginning. He did not often speak thus, even to the Twelve; and there must have been a great tenderness in His heart at the moment to prompt the use of that term of address for the rough and ready horny-handed group of grown men before Him. Yet the words He went on to utter had nothing tender about them. There was no watering down of His startling original denunciation of the danger of wealth. On the contrary, He made it even stronger. St. John Chrysostom and St. Thomas Aquinas declare: "He said it was difficult before; now He says it is impossible!"

Children, I repeat it. How hard it is for those who trust in wealth to enter the kingdom of heaven! It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye than

for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven!

One of the Fathers of the Church, Venerable Bede, suggests that Our Lord was asking a question here, and then giving the answer:

Children, how hard is it for those who trust in wealth to enter the kingdom of heaven? It is easier for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, etc.

But most of the students of the Gospel leave it as a straight statement by Our Lord; and in any case, it comes to the same thing: Our Lord wished not to water down but to emphasize still more strongly His terrible words about the dangers of earthly wealth.

Still, there is a difference here. What He first said was:

It is hard for a *rich man* to be able to enter the kingdom of heaven.

But in the second place he added something else.

How hard it is for those *who trust in wealth* to enter the kingdom of heaven.

And St. Thomas Aquinas with his usual penetrating genius sums it up thus:

For a rich man not to love his wealth is difficult; but for a rich man who loves his wealth to enter heaven is impossible.

Impossible, that is, without a special miracle of grace from Almighty God; and that is the meaning of Our Lord's concluding word on the subject:

With men it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.

Such is the doctrine of Christ on the

dangers of earthly riches as far as eternal salvation is concerned. It is a terrible doctrine, not an easy one nor one calculated to soothe the sensibilities and win the acclaim of great and influential people in this world. Pope Leo XIII was right in declaring that it amounts to this: earthly wealth is no guarantee of the life that shall never end, but *rather the contrary*. But one would be "blind and foolish" (to use one of Our Lord's own epithets) to refuse to accept the earnest and insistent teaching of Jesus Christ, the Eternal Truth, on a matter affecting eternal life or eternal damnation merely because it does not fall in with the spirit of this world.

But what about the comparison Our Lord made use of: the camel and the needle's eye? Is not this a mere figure of speech, the kind of literary exaggeration that is called "hyperbole"? And even as a figure of speech, was He really talking about a needle's eye? Has not modern science discovered that there was a certain small gate in the city of Jerusalem called "the needle's eye", so low that camels had to be unloaded of their burdens before they could get through?

As to "hyperbole", while it is undoubtedly true that Our Lord was using a figure of speech, comparing the difficulty of a selfish, self-satisfied rich man's entering heaven to the difficulty of a camel's passing through a needle's eye, the fact is that it would take a miracle of transformation to put a camel through a needle's eye; but such a miracle could do it. Similarly, it takes a miracle of transformation to get a wealthy man who is attached to his wealth through the gate of heaven.

Even as a figure of speech this is no exaggeration, but the absolute truth.

Regarding the gate of Jerusalem called "the needle's eye", modern science can hardly be credited with this discovery. St. Thomas Aquinas, writing about the year 1250, refers to the same notion as put forward "by an unknown author in a certain commentary on the Gospel." But St. Thomas gives no special credence to the idea; and as a matter of fact, no reliable historian of ancient or modern times is acquainted with any such gate in the city of Jerusalem.

But even if there were such a gate, what difference would it make in Our Lord's teaching? According to the story, a camel had to be unloaded of its merchandise before it could get through this legendary "needle's eye" gate; but a rich man too must become "unloaded" of attachment to his wealth before he can get through the gate of heaven.

So much for Our Lord's teaching on how hard it is for a rich man to get to heaven. To repeat once more, it comes down to this: Any rich man will have an exceptionally hard time to get to heaven; but a rich man who is selfishly attached to his wealth will find it impossible to do so without a special miracle of grace from Almighty God.

In later articles we shall take up Our Lord's teaching on the question of whether a rich man has to give up *all* his wealth in order to get to heaven; and just what it is that a rich man who remains rich has to do in order to get there; and finally, how Our Lord's stern teaching on the dangers of wealth can be reconciled with the fact that he had so many wealthy friends.

Don't tell everything you know. If you do, other people will know all you know, and all they know, too. Then you will be the most stupid person in the crowd.

Prods to Perfection

This monthly feature, consisting of anecdotes and quotations from real life, is designed to inspire practices that should be second nature to the character of a Christian.

J. P. Schaefer

THERE is nothing upon which Sacred Scripture insists so much as the importance and necessity of prayer. For no other action of our lives did Christ give such specific and detailed instructions, telling us that we must 'pray always', how we must pray, for what intentions, and for whom we should pray, even going so far as to place the words of the greatest prayer of them all upon our very lips: "Thus shalt thou pray: 'Our Father, who art in heaven . . .' ". Echoing the insistence of his Divine Master, St. Alphonsus, one of the great Doctors of the Church, in his sermons and his writings repeated over and over this dictum: "He who prays will certainly be saved; he who does not pray will certainly be lost." The following stories and reflections translate into life and action this insistence of Christ and the Saints upon the necessity of prayer. We invite you to read them slowly, reflectively. May the words and examples of others make of you a more prayerful man or woman.

* * * * *

"I believe that those who pray do more for the world than those who fight; and that if the world comes to an evil end it will be because there are more battles than prayers. I believe that if there were a single hour, a single day when the earth sent no prayer to heaven, that day and that hour would be the last day and the last hour of the universe." *Donoso Cortez.*

* * * * *

A teacher once asked a small boy in

her class if he understood the phrase 'rapid enunciation'. With the candor of the young, the boy replied: "Yes'm, its the way folks say their prayers on cold nights."

* * * * *

An English Bishop one day went for a ride in his carriage on the Isle of Man. There he came upon a convict in his striped uniform, breaking stores. The convict was working in a kneeling position upon the side of the road. The prelate talked to him for a little while, imparting some of his best fatherly advice and encouragement. As he was about to drive off, he sighed: "Ah, my man, I wish I could break up the stony hearts of my people as you break these rocks on the highway." From his kneeling position the convict looked up: "Perhaps, sir, you don't work on your knees."

* * * * *

President Lincoln once said: "I have been driven to my knees many times by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go."

* * * * *

An old fisherman took a young man as passenger in his boat. On one of the oars was written the word, 'Pray'. On the other oar, the word, 'Work'. The youth was amused. "You're out of date, Uncle. What does anybody want with prayer, if he works?" The old man said nothing, but let go the oar on which 'Pray' was written, and rowed with the other alone. He rowed and rowed, but only turned round and round, and

made no progress.

* * * *

Upon being made Bishop of Cochin, China, Monsignor Lefevre proclaimed that his very first action would be the founding of a Carmelite monastery at Saizon. Someone ventured to comment: "Necessities ought to precede luxuries in the building up of a diocese." Overhearing the remark, the Bishop replied: "What you consider a luxury is to me the first necessity of the Christian ministry. Ten nuns who pray will help me as much as twenty missionaries who preach."

* * * *

When Pope Pius X had to settle some important question for which he was not prepared, he used to say: "I will think about it." Then, looking to the crucifix, he would add: "*He* will decide."

* * * *

A poor blind man once made a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas of Canterbury and was cured. After the first transport of joy had passed he remembered that in his prayer, he had forgotten to include the words, "if it be the will of God". He returned to the tomb and prayed: "Oh, great St. Thomas, I thank thee for the favor thou hast just obtained for me. But if the use of my eyes should prove hurtful to me, or endanger my eternal salvation, I humbly ask of thee to make me blind again." At the same moment he once more lost the use of his eyes and became as blind as before.

* * * *

In the days of the Crusades, a French

officer fell into the hands of the Moslems, was taken prisoner and used as a slave by one of them. The Moslem treated him contemptuously, calling him, "Dog of a Christian". The Frenchman, irate, exclaimed: "I am your prisoner; but I am a man also, just as you. Why do you treat me thus?" "You a man?" the Moslem replied. "No! You have been my prisoner now for six months and I have not yet seen you pray!"

* * * *

Conviction should always be translated into action. If you are convinced of the necessity and beauty of prayer, then it will have an important place in your everyday life. It will lead you never to omit your morning and evening prayers, to say them upon your knees—most of the time—never to hurry through them, as though they were but a preliminary to something far more important. It will lead to one of the most beautiful scenes that can be witnessed in this world, the picture of little children, though they will make laughable mistakes, learning to pray from their mothers and fathers. It will bring strong men and self-confident women to regard themselves as not so strong, not so self-confident, to seek more frequently the help and advice of One Who at times is the only help. With these thoughts in mind, will you read the preceding stories and reflections once more? Let the example and words of others lead to a practical resolution in your own life!

Dowry

A woman who fasted for sixty-two days
To prove that the stunt could be done,
From hundreds of Scotsmen had letters of praise,
And proposals from seventy-one.

—Sunshine Magazine

Happenings in Rome

Monthly round-up of significant events in the capitol of Christendom.

C. D. McEnniry

WE KNOW that the Holy See can fulminate against a traitorous priest an excommunication so terrible that only the Pope can free him from it if he repents, and the faithful must avoid him whenever he attempts any sacred rite, and that nobody may receive absolution from him except at the hour of death. However we hardly expected such a case to occur in our own day. The Checkoslovak priest, John Dechet, has been so excommunicated, because he dared to take over the administration of the vacant diocese of Neusohl from the communist stooges who usurped the right of conferring this diocese. The diocese has 120 parishes and 231,000 Catholics. What a heartbreak for the Holy Father to see the faith of so many of his children in imminent danger! * * * * Time was when few could hope to see the Pope. After the Freemason-inspired aggression by the Garibaldiens, the Holy Father retired within the walls of his Vatican residence where one Pope after another remained a voluntary prisoner for more than a half a century. You would have to know somebody who knew somebody who knew somebody before you acquired a precious ticket that would let you in. Precautions were imperative. Since the reconciliation between the Holy See and Italy ingress has been easier. During the war Pope Pius XII said a military uniform was ticket enough. A soldier of any army could enter a public audience in the Vatican Hall and receive the comfort of seeing the Pope and receiving his blessing. The Nazis did not allow their men to enjoy this concession, but the Allies used it to the full. During this Holy Year *everybody*

can come. No ticket is needed. No place is big enough except the vast nave of St. Peter's. Even since he has gone to his summer home at Castel Gandolfo the Pope comes in to Rome every Wednesday and Saturday at six-thirty in the evening to receive and bless the pilgrims. * * * * To give an idea of these audiences we copy the official list of the pilgrimages of one day. They came from: ITALY—delegations from many dioceses. FRANCE—"Secours Catholiques." BELGIUM—the Good Shepherds. SCOTLAND—a pilgrimage from Glasgow. MALTA. IRELAND—students from the University of Cork. UNITED STATES. GERMANY. DENMARK. SWEDEN. SPAIN. GUATAMALA. COSTARICO. NICARAGUA. MEXICO. BRAZIL. HONDURAS. The Pope conversed for a long time with them, especially with the Italian workmen and with the foreign pilgrims. He started to leave amid clapping, waving, and "Long live the Pope!" As he reached the door, he turned once more and blessed the cheering multitude. * * * * The countless numbers flocking to these audiences inspired the Pope to say in his Encyclical urging prayers and penance for peace: "On the one hand we are offered the spectacle of multitudes coming to Rome this Jubilee Year from every corner of the earth, and giving testimony of concordant faith, of brotherly union, of ardent devotion, in such numbers as this Eternal City, which has known so many celebrated events in the course of centuries, has never before seen. And we have received these innumerable multitudes with loving solicitude, comforting them with pa-

ternal exhortations and proposing to them new and glowing examples of saintliness, urging them, not without fruitful results, to return to the way of true Christian life and conduct". * * * All we lovers of Our Mother of Perpetual Help are stronger than ever in our devotion to her on learning that, when the Pope wanted to give a gift to the mother of St. Maria Goretti, the martyr of chastity, he could find nothing more fitting than a copy of the Miraculous Picture of Our Mother of Perpetual Help enthroned in the Redemptorist Church of Sant' Alfonso on the Esquiline Hill. * * * * Three Bishops said Mass before the Miraculous Picture on Mary's feast day, one from Brazil, one from Australia, and one from Italy. Our Lady's lovers had brought flowers in such profusion that they banked mountain high in the sanctuary where her Picture is installed. * * * * Even in the Pope's kingdom, smaller in extent than a Kansas quarter-section farm, there are factories (mosaics, etc.). The factory hands, as everywhere else, present their demands. This is what they demanded: to make their Easter Duty together and then proceed in a body to visit the four Basilicas in order to gain the indulgence of the Holy Year. They received Communion in the church of the Holy Spirit, the church on your left just before you enter the colonnade of St. Peter's. Then a fleet of buses brought them to the Basilica of St. Paul, to the Basilica of St. John Lateran, to the Basilica of St. Mary Major, and finally back to the Basilica of St. Peter, where they prayed for the Pope and received with deep respect a commemorative medal which he sent them. Managers and men took turns carrying the cross of penance which must lead a Holy Year procession. * * * * *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*

tells what is said and done in the general government of the Church. It is the Pope's official publication. *L'Osservatore Romano* tells what happens in Rome. It is not the Pope's official publication, but it is something like it. Just ninety years ago, July 1, a little after five o'clock in the evening, the first issue of the *Osservatore* appeared. There was no paper in Rome to give the Catholic view of the events of the day. The Masonic government gave permission to start one. It had to be submitted to them. All they did was to change the title and the purpose. Then they approved it. The editors were men who were accustomed to being arrested for saying the truth in public. And so they carried on. During the war the totalitarian newspapers could not be trusted. Everybody rushed for the *Osservatore*. The fascists and the nazis hated it and obstructed it, but they did not dare to go quite so far as to suppress it entirely. * * * * The ancient arches of the Belvedere Court in the Vatican resounded with the "Envivas" of still another celebration this year. The one-hundredth anniversary of the foundation of one arm of the Pope's military establishment: The Palatine Guard of Honor. Unlike the Swiss Guards, they are mostly Romans, get no pay, and serve only on feasts. There are more than a hundred of them, wearing a uniform of blue, white and gold, with a red plume in their hat and an old model rifle on their arm. The Holy Father congratulated them on a hundred years of fidelity to their motto: "Loyalty to the Faith of Our Fathers (Fide Constamus Avita)". He blessed them and their families and prayed God to keep far from Rome and the world the scourge of war. (Doesn't seem to be an army of aggression!) * * * *



Side Glances

By the Bystander

The events at Necedah, Wisconsin, have raised many questions in the minds of both Catholics and non-Catholics. The question that many good Catholics ask is whether they are lacking in faith if they cannot bring themselves to accept the authenticity of a so-called appearance of the Blessed Mother of God to an individual, when thousands seem to have become enthusiastic about it. Non-Catholics want to know whether Catholics naively accept any person's statement that he (or she) has been favored with a supernatural visitation. Everybody asks questions about the particular happenings at Necedah. May one believe that the Blessed Mother appeared to Mrs. Van Hoof, before ecclesiastical authority makes any pronouncement on the matter? What principles are to be followed in judging the affair? Is it wrong to be curious, skeptical, enthusiastic? Here are some of the rules laid down by common sense and the teachings of faith concerning all such problems.

It must be remembered, in the first place, that revelations made to individuals cannot and do not become a part of the matter of divine faith that must be believed by all Catholics. A revelation is a supernatural manifestation of a hidden truth, made by God or one of the saints of God. God can make such revelations binding on all mankind. He did so through His inspired word in the Bible, and through the teachings of Christ to the apostles, which were to be handed down by them in His Church to the end of time. The last universally binding revelation that God made could not be dated later than the death of the last apostle. Modern definitions of dogma on the part of the Church

are merely affirmations of truths contained in the Bible or handed down from the apostles in unbroken tradition. Any new revelation of a hidden truth made after the time of the apostles could be only a *private* revelation, i.e., not made mandatory on all men. It follows from this that there is no obligation whatsoever binding Christians to believe either in the truth of a modern apparition to an individual, or in the authenticity of a message that such an individual attributes to the apparition. Even when the Church has approved the acceptance and publication of such private revelations, she does not make them an object of divine faith nor command Christians to believe them. She merely permits them to be published because, after thorough investigation, they seem credible to her, and seem capable of promoting the welfare of souls. But each individual is still left free to examine the evidence of the truth of such revelations and to accept or reject them according as the evidence appeals to his mind. At the same time, the Church protects her children from being taken in by spiritual "fakes" by forbidding the publication of alleged private revelations without ecclesiastical approbation.

Since it is left to the individual to judge for himself the genuineness of a reported apparition or revelation, Catholics should know the rules that the Church herself follows in investigating them. These rules come under four heads: 1) the character of the person who maintains that he has received a revelation; 2) the content of the revelation itself; 3) the effect of the revelation; 4) the signs that accompany the so-called revelation. Only when all the

rules under these four heads have been applied together to a specific case, should a person make his own decision as to accepting or rejecting it as a genuine supernatural happening.

With regard to the character of the person who professes to have seen a vision or received a revelation, it is necessary to investigate both the natural and supernatural qualities possessed by that person. God can make a revelation to anybody, even to a sinner, but ordinarily He does so only to those who are fervent, childlike, well-balanced and free from abnormality. Certainly if there be any evidence of hysteria, auto-suggestion, psycho-neurosis, emotional imbalance in a person who tells of a vision, one would rightly doubt or disbelieve the claim. If the person is known to be something of a fanatic, or over-imaginative, or habituated to exaggeration, it would be foolish to accept his statement that he had been vouchsafed a vision. Furthermore, it must be investigated whether the person is possessed of solid virtue in general, and of two basic virtues in particular, namely, humility and obedience. If there be the least trace of self-glorification in reporting the vision, or of resentment against those who do not believe in it, or of eagerness to attract attention to self, then humility is lacking and it is more likely that the devil is at work in the person than God. If, likewise, there is unwillingness to submit fully to a spiritual director, or a tendency to by-pass the authorities of the Church, or directly to oppose them, then a bystander can come to the conclusion at once that the alleged vision is not from God. St. Theresa of Avila stated that if there was a contradiction between what was commanded a person in a private vision and the command of an ordinary confessor, then the confessor was unhesitatingly to be obeyed. God does not destroy the duty of ordinary obedience by visions or revelations.

With regard to the content of the alleged revelation, one who wants to decide for himself whether it is genuine or not will investigate these three things: 1) Whether it is in opposition to any truth of faith already made known by God, directly or through His Church. St. Paul sets down this rule: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." (Gal. 1/8) It is obvious that God cannot contradict Himself. He has revealed the truth in His Church, and cannot teach something contrary to that truth in a private revelation. 2) Whether it is opposed in any way to decency or the moral law. 3) Whether it is coherent, logical, and in accord with elementary prudence and propriety. God would certainly not be responsible for any foolish or silly statements attributed to Him or His saints by professed visionaries.

With regard to the effects of the so-called apparition and revelation, it must be clear that these are salutary and spiritually beneficial both for the person directly involved and for all who are affected by the vision in any way. According to St. Thomas and St. Theresa, the invariable effect of a true supernatural apparition is a great wonderment and fear in the person favored, followed by a sense of deep and lasting peace that cannot be shaken even by suffering and persecution. Agitation, uneasiness, resentment, sadness, discouragement in a person who professes to have seen a vision, would be sign that he has been deceived. So too, a vision that has actually been granted by God would produce great spiritual benefits in behalf of those who came to know of it or to accept its message. If little except idle curiosity, strife and contention, disobedience and anticlericalism, followed on the announcement of a person that he had seen an apparition, one would have reason to believe that it was not a work of God.

The Liguorian

With regard to the signs that accompany an apparition, there is one and only one that affords a convincing proof that God has in some special and supernatural way visited a soul. That is an indubitable miracle or portent of some kind. The one clear proof of the divinity of Christ and of the truth of His teaching is miracles. The one continuing proof of the divinity of the Catholic Church is the fact that in every age there are miracles of God's intervention occurring within her fold. So too, even if a saintly and sensible individual states that he has seen the Blessed Mother, or that she has spoken to him, every Catholic may without imprudence doubt the fact or hold the opinion that it was the result of hysteria or illusion, until the final and unanswerable proof has been given through a miracle of God's power. Even then, what we stated above remains true, that Catholics are not bound in conscience to accept the apparition on divine faith. Then it becomes a matter of common sense and human prudence to accept what God has evidently confirmed by intervening in the ordinary operation of the laws of nature.

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All these principles can be applied by

individual Catholics to all so-called modern apparitions, even to those that the Church permits to be published and has made the center of public devotion. By these tests the apparitions at Lourdes and Fatima appear, to all who have studied the evidence and circumstances surrounding them, authentic and genuine. They have been confirmed, not by one, but by many miracles. By these tests it can be seen that there is good reason to withhold judgment on the alleged apparitions at Necedah, Wisconsin, if not seriously to doubt their genuineness. It is true that not all the evidence is at hand to everybody; it is true that legend and exaggeration quickly distort the facts in cases of this kind. But it is also very wise for all Catholics to imitate the Church herself, which waits and watches and investigates a long time before it permits even so much as the publishing of such strange events. Above all, no Catholic should feel that there is something wrong with his own faith if, when thousands of other people become enthusiastic about some alleged supernatural happening, he himself remains cold and doubtful. His faith is ample if he believes all that the Church has authoritatively proposed to his belief.

Easy Name

One of the missionary catechists was instructing her group of children on the meaning of the Holy Trinity. She described how the Third Person of the Trinity came down upon the Apostles on Pentecost, and towards the end of the lesson, wishing to see how much had been absorbed, asked a few questions.

"Tell me, Susan, has the Holy Spirit a private name of His own, like mine?"

At this Susan looked puzzled.

"Well," said the teacher, "perhaps it is not exactly a name like mine and yours. He is called the paraclete. Is that too big for you to remember?"

"Oh no, I'll remember that," said Susan brightly. "It sounds something like parachute, and after all He did come down on the Apostles, just like you told us."



Catholic Anecdotes

The Silent Sermon

In his interesting book, *Tales of Xavier*, Bishop James E. Walsh of Maryknoll records in a new way the oft told story of how St. Francis and his companion turned the other cheek in imitation of Christ.

The incident happened at Yamaguchi in Japan, where the saint and a few chosen companions were just beginning to till the missionary soil.

One day Father Francis took Brother Juan Fernandez with him into the heart of town for some street preaching. They selected a spot near a much frequented temple, and Brother Fernandez began to speak about the one true God.

One of the bystanders, as soon as he understood the trend of the remarks, became very angry. Planting himself in front of the speaker, he cried:

"Beggarly foreign devils! Who invited you to come and teach us!"

And so saying, he spat full in the face of the young missionary.

Brother Fernandez turned pale and instinctively raised his arm. But Father Francis at his side quickly whispered:

"The other cheek, Juan. We preach Christ crucified!"

The young brother had learned his lesson well. He calmly wiped his face with his handkerchief, and smiled at the crowd.

"As I was saying," he resumed serenely, "there is only one God."

Later on, as the two missionaries were leaving the square, they were ac-

costed by a dignified looking man, who greeted them, and then said:

"You are men of religion. I am only a merchant, yet I am also a humble aspirant to virtue. All my life I have sought it, but it is hard to find. In fact, I was beginning to think there was no such thing, until this morning. In my fifty years of mortal life I have never before seen an example of true virtue such as my eyes witnessed just now. I would like to hear more of your doctrine."

"Gladly will we teach you, sir," said Francis.

This man became one of the first Christians of Japan.

Prayer of The Weary

The story is told of an old missionary in Paris who, having reached his eightieth year, had to abandon his missionary travels for good. It was his pious custom to go frequently into the church where invariably, after praying for a moment or two, he would doze off to sleep.

The archbishop had a great fondness for the old priest, and said jokingly to him one day:

"What is this I hear of you, Father, that every time you go into the church you immediately fall asleep?"

"Ah, your Lordship, it's the truth, it's the truth," said the old man. "I bow my head when I get weary of praying, and I look up at the Lord and I say: 'Lord, let this poor old hound lie down here awhile at Your feet.'"

The story is related in the *Stigmatine*.



Pointed Paragraphs

Weak-Voiced Objection

The decision of Pope Pius XII solemnly to proclaim the dogma of the assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven has brought forth some interesting comments from Anglican Church leaders.

Dr. Geoffrey Fisher, archbishop of Canterbury in England, together with Dr. Cyril Garbett, archbishop of York and second ranking prelate of the Church of England, recently co-signed the following statement:

"We must at once state publicly that the Church of England does not and cannot hold this doctrine to be a necessary part of the Catholic faith, belief in which may be required of members of the Church. The Church of England renders honor and reverence to the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. But there is not the smallest evidence in the Scripture or in the teaching of the early Church of belief in the doctrine of her bodily assumption. The Church of England refuses to regard as requisite for a saving faith any doctrines or opinions which are not plainly contained in the Scriptures."

These objections to a doctrine that the universal Catholic Church has openly and clearly held since the sixth century (which proves that it could have come only from the solid traditions handed down by the apostles), by the leaders of a religious sect that had its origin so recently as in the 16th century, is faintly amusing. When King Henry VIII broke with the Pope at that time, he placed himself and most of England outside the mainstream of

Catholic tradition. This led to the abandonment, in time, of many traditional, apostolic and even Scriptural doctrines. It led to the wild disunity of the Anglican Church, in which one Anglican parish church will have the Mass, the seven sacraments and practically all the devotional practices of the Roman liturgy, while another Anglican parish church, under the same jurisdictional authority, will have no Mass, a few sacraments, and purely Puritan forms of worship.

We predict, therefore, that the high Anglican churches will accept the doctrine of the assumption of Mary without a quibble, while the low Anglican churches will reject it. Till they can get together doctrinally among themselves, silence would seem to be their most appropriate comment on the doctrines of the universal Catholic Church.

For Catholics, the declaration of the dogma of the assumption of Our Lady will make little change in their thinking and acting. They have believed it all along, and have been acting on the belief for centuries. The Holy Father will merely state definitively and infallibly what has been very definitely held before.

Are Sex Sins Normal?

We recommend that anyone who, up to now, has been a patron and reader of "Consumers' Reports", immediately cancel their subscription and forego all future cooperation with it. This publication has made itself unfit for Christian homes, even for non-Christian homes that have any respect for conscience and elementary natural law.

In the health and medical section of a recent issue, an article was published from the pen of a woman doctor, Clara Thompson by name. This article is entitled "Sex and Adolescence", and it boldly tells parents to think nothing of practices of masturbation, homosexuality and "experimental necking" on the part of their growing youngsters. It is disgusting and tragic even to have to report on such things. But since "Consumers' Reports" aims itself at family circles and acts as a super-advisor on family problems, it is necessary to warn families against it.

As between God, Who created a natural law for all human beings and made His law especially clear to conscience in regard to sex, and Freud, who discarded God's pattern and re-fashioned human beings into sex organs with arms and legs, Dr. Clara Thompson chooses Freud. She tells parents not to worry at all about self-abuse on the part of their children—it is just part of their normal development. She tells them to expect a certain amount of homo-sexuality and not to get worked up over it. She suggests that they prepare their children for the avoidance of pregnancy in pre-marital affairs, but that they should not worry about sexual experimentation short of it.

How anyone, even an agnostic or self-styled atheist, could become a doctor of medicine without learning something of the tremendous personal and social harm that follows upon such libertinism as she advocates, is a mystery. How any Christian, who must have concern for the souls of his children and a burning zeal to spare them the soul-searing experience of sin, can permit such reading matter in his home, is hard to understand. Let's leave it to the pagans.

Religion, American Brand?

The high humor of a quotation carried recently by newspapers and news magazines from the lips of actress Bette Davis must not have escaped New Englanders, nor other sturdy Americans. Bette was leaving the scene of her "wedding" to her fourth "husband" when the reporters asked her to pose for a picture in the act of kissing her new partner. Chirped the Hollywood darling:

"I'm from New England, and we don't do such things publicly in New England."

Good old New England! Prim, pert, proper New England! Aren't you proud of your little girl? She may cast off husbands like costumes, and practice successive polygamy like pagans, but New Englanders still don't kiss in public. Who said Hollywood spoils people? Whoever does hasn't heard of Bette.

But it isn't Bette Davis alone nor New England alone that produces such high but tragic humor. It is indigenous to all parts of America. It is found in the columns of the newspaper in Milwaukee that is morally outraged over a church raffle, but strongly in favor of birth control. It is pictured in the life of the married man in Cleveland who marches with the Holy Name Society on a Sunday and yet has regular dates with a paramour. It is given expression by the Rotarian from Denver who gives speeches about brotherly love and yet fires an employee who favors a union in his shop.

Between speech and action, between appearances and principles, between respectability and solid virtue, there are too many gaps in America. The inconsistencies will no longer seem remotely humorous when men are judged on the last day "according to their works"!



Liguoriana



EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

Selected and Edited by J. Schaefer

THE LAST THINGS

8. *State of the Damned After the Universal Judgment:*

Though many of the pagans were true atheists, considering hell a fable invented to frighten the wicked, the more renowned of the ancient philosophers, such as Socrates, Xenophon, Aristotle, Plato, and others, had no difficulty in admitting the existence of a future life—a heaven where the good would be rewarded, and a hell where the evil are to be punished. Only the most perverted of men will deny that there is a God, the Creator and Governor of all things. Such men would prefer to deny the existence of God, than to face the just chastisement of their own misdeeds.

On the one hand, men know perfectly well that God is a just rewarder of good, and at the same time they behold in the world countless wicked men who live in the midst of prosperity, while many of the virtuous live out their lives in the midst of affliction and misfortune. Hence, most people are convinced that after this mortal life, there exists another world in which vice is to be chastised and virtue rewarded as it deserves.

The most famous of the pagan philosophers did not hesitate to teach that there exists in the other life a heaven and a hell. Xenophon and Socrates, for instance, remarked that, "rewards are in store for those who please God, and punishments for those who displease Him". The same sentiments are expressed by Plato, Plutarch and others. While I refrain from quoting passages from these philosophers, I cannot pass

over in silence two beautiful passages of the great orator, Cicero. In the first, he exclaims: "I wish to have no part with those who have recently begun to teach that souls die along with bodies, and that all is destroyed by death. Of far more weight with me is the authority of the ancient philosophers and of our own ancestors. They paid religious homage to the dead, and considered that their entrance into heaven should be made easy for every good and just man." The second passage is even more to the point: "Those souls, which have been soiled by the vices of this life, will take the false road which separates them from the company of the gods; on the other hand, those who have preserved themselves pure and chaste, will find easy admittance to the divinity, the source of their existence."

Among the fables of pagan peoples, there are numerous tales, which, though they are fictitious, nevertheless attest to the belief of these peoples in the existence of a place of punishment in the future life. For us Christians, however, this belief of ancient pagans, and their philosophers, is but a substantiating argument. For we have the word of God Himself, attesting to the existence of hell in countless passages of Sacred Scripture.

The question as to the place where hell is situated has been a matter of conjecture among the Fathers of the Church and theologians. Saint John Chrysostom, for instance, was of the opinion that it is situated outside the bounds of this universe. More commonly and with more reason, other

theologians think that hell is situated within the earth itself. Some have even gone so far as to declare that it is near the surface of the globe, basing their opinion, rather quaintly, upon the existence of many volcanic mountains, such as Vesuvius, the Volcanic Isles, Mt. Etna, and others.

Aside from these debatable opinions, a group of heretics, known as the Ubiquitists, maintained that hell is not restricted to any determined place, but is to be found everywhere, since God has not destined any special place for the damned. This opinion, however, is evidently false, and contrary to the common belief of the Catholic Church, which teaches us that God has established a definite place for the demons and the reprobate, as is evident from several texts of Sacred Scripture. Saint Jerome deduces this specifically from a passage in the book of Numbers (Num. 16/31-33). Here is described the fate of Dathan and Abiron who were precipitated into hell, falling into a chasm which opened under their very feet. At the same time a great flame burst from the earth and killed two hundred and fifty men who were accomplices in their sin. Moreover, in many passages of Sacred Scripture, the word, 'descend', is used in reference to hell, indicating that hell is situated in the bowels of the earth.

This assertion is confirmed by a passage of St. Luke (16/22): "But the rich man also died and was buried in hell." The sacred text employs the word 'buried', because burials are made within the earth. Moreover, the rich man himself describes hell as a "place of torment" (Lk. 16/28), confirming the opinion that hell is a determined and definite place. In another place it is called a 'lake'; "Thou hast saved me from those descending into the lake",

(Ps. 29/3); and elsewhere, a pool: "And the devil who deceived them was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone." (Apoc. 20/9) It is evident, therefore, that hell is a determined place, and most probably situated within the earth. But, as to where, precisely, it is situated, whether at the very center of the earth, or nearer to the surface, cannot be determined from any revealed document. St. Thomas also declared that the dimensions of hell, which will be the dwelling place of the damned after the resurrection, cannot be determined.

Let us now treat of the pains of hell, and, first of all, of that of sense. St. Thomas proves that the fire of hell is a corporeal and material fire, though, for the most part, he does not write of the fire which torments the souls separated from their bodies, but of that which the damned are to endure after their corporeal resurrection. Many heretics have maintained that the fire of hell is not material, but only metaphorical or imaginary fire. There are numerous texts in Sacred Scripture, however, which demonstrate that the fire of hell is a true, material and corporeal fire. We read, for instance, in the book of Deuteronomy: "A fire is kindled in my wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell." (Deut. 32/22) And in the book of Job: "A fire that is not kindled shall devour him" (Job 20/26), revealing that this fire of hell needs not to be nourished, but, once enkindled by God, burns eternally. There are a number of passages in the book of Isaiah referring to this fire of hell: "Which of you can dwell with devouring fire? which of you shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (33/14); "Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be a loathsome sight to all flesh." (66/24) "He

will give fire, and worms into their flesh, that they may burn, and may feel forever." (Judith 16/21)

In the parable of the gospel, the rich man buried in hell cries out to Lazarus, "I am tormented in this flame." (Lk. 16/24) He says, "in this flame", to show that the fire of hell is a fire of a particular type, a fire prepared expressly to avenge the injuries which sin has done to God by carnal pleasures. For, as the book of Ecclesiasticus remarks, "the vengeance on the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms." (Eccl. 7/19) Hence, St. Thomas argues that this fire will be the instrument of the avenging justice of almighty God.

But here a difficulty is posed: how is it possible for corporeal fire to torment the spiritual soul? In answer to this question, we can only say that we know that it can be done. Perhaps the answer lies in this explanation of many theologians. The material fire of hell will be given an extraordinary power by God, whereby it will be able to bind the spiritual soul to its place of torment, thus causing the soul untold humiliation and pain.

In this same fire, St. Thomas remarks, the bodies of the damned, in addition to the intense heat, will endure bitter cold, passing from one to the other, without knowing a moment of relief. Thus do Scripture scholars explain the passage of the book of Job: "Let him pass from the snow water to excessive heat, and his sin even to hell." (Job. 24/19) Hence, St. Jerome says, the damned in hell endure all their torments in this one fire.

In addition to their sufferings from

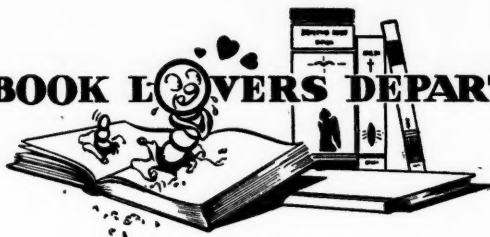
the heat and cold of the fire of hell, Sacred Scripture enumerates a number of other torments which will afflict the damned. One of these is the 'worm' to which the Scriptures refer frequently. Some commentators have explained this 'worm' as a material thing, which will feed upon, without consuming, the flesh of the damned. But most theologians explain it metaphorically as the remorse of conscience which will afflict the damned in the fire and darkness of hell. Forever will they have imprinted on their memories the results of their sins; forever will they repeat the words ascribed to them in the book of Wisdom: "We have erred from the way of truth, we wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction and have walked through hard ways. What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? . . . Such things as these the sinners said in hell." (Wis. 5/6-14)

Added to their own remorse of conscience, the damned will also be tormented by the reproaches of the demons. This will be one of the most cruel punishments of the damned: the devils, who are their enemies, will continually mock them and remind them of their sins. Nor will the sufferings of the bodies of the damned cease here. They will also be afflicted by the terrible darkness of hell, described by the holy man, Job: "Before I go, and return no more, to a land that is dark and covered with the mist of death: a land of misery and darkness, where the shadow of death, and no order, but everlasting horror dwelleth." (Job. 10/22)

And Don't Talk Back

"Young man," said the stern parent to his recalcitrant offspring, "go to your room at once, lock yourself in, and bring me the key."

BOOK LOVERS DEPARTMENT



CATHOLIC AUTHOR OF THE MONTH GIOVANNI PAPINI 1881- Catholic Apologist

I. Life:

Giovanni Papini was born in Florence, Italy, on January 9, 1881. After his formal education ended at the normal school, he entered the field of journalism and education. Papini taught Italian in an Anglo-Italian school for one year, and served as librarian at the Museum of Anthropology from 1902 until 1904. For many years he was a violent revolutionist and a bitter opponent of the Catholic Church. In philosophy he was the best Italian representative of pragmatism, the system that rejected absolute truth and accepted utility as the only criterion of truth. In 1907 Papini married Giacinta Giovagnolia and their marriage was blessed with two daughters. During the first world war he was rejected for military service for medical reasons, but collaborated with Mussolini on the newspaper, *Popolo d'Italia*. Papini has held the office of Minister of Education in the Italian cabinet. After many years of violent opposition to the Church, Papini became a convert in 1920. He is widely known throughout the world as a great thinker and powerful writer.

II. Writings:

Papini's career has been that of a journalist. Alone and with others he has founded many literary and philosophical reviews. His style is so impassioned that it becomes violent at times. Since his conversion he has written many books, most of which have been translated into English. *St. Augustine* is a tribute to the Saint

by one of his warm admirers. In fact, Papini's life and literary style is strongly reminiscent of the life and literary expression of the great African bishop. *Failure* is Papini's own *Confessions*. *Laborers in the Vineyard* is a collection of literary and religious criticism. *Dante Vivo* is a new interpretation of Dante by a fellow Florentine. *Gog*, the satirical novel of an American millionaire, is a bitter denunciation of the modern enemies of Christ. *Four and Twenty Minds* contains essays on prominent literary and philosophical figures. His most recent book, *The Letters of Pope Celestine VI*, is a series of admonitions from a mythical pope to various classes of Catholics today. All of Papini's books are interesting and stimulating reading.

III. The Book:

The best known of his books is *The Life of Christ*, published in the year of his conversion. In this work Papini makes it very clear that the reason for his entrance into the Church was his ardent love for Christ. This book is factually sound, but its value lies in its spirit of passionate and tender love for the central figure of all history. Any reader will leave this book with a greater love for Christ and new insights into the character of Christ. It is regrettable that the Scripture texts in the English translation by Dorothy Canfield are from the King James version, and that the beautiful prayer to Christ was omitted. Papini is one of the great writers of the Catholic revival of letters.

OCTOBER BOOK REVIEWS

Fathers of the Church

Ancient Christian Writers. St. Augustine. The Greatness of Soul. The Teacher. Translated by Rev. Joseph M. Colleran, C.Ss.R. 225 pp. Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press. \$3.00.

The Fathers of the Church. Vol. 7. Niceta of Remesiana. Translated by Gerald G. Walsh, S.J. *Sulpicius Severus.* Translated by Bernard M. Peebles.

Vincent of Lerins. Translated by Rudolph E. Morris. *Prosper of Aquitaine.* Translated by J. R. O'Donnell, C.S.B. 443 pp. New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc. \$5.00.

The Fathers of the Church. Vol. 8. St. Augustine. The City of God, Books I-VII. Translated by Demetrius B. Zema, S.J. and Gerald G. Walsh, S.J. Introduction by Etienne Gilson. 401 pp. \$5.00.

Two different groups of American scholars are issuing new translations of the early Christian writers to supplant the former Anglican work, the only previous English translation. The selections of the writings have been good, and the translations have been uniformly well done.

Two of the smaller works of St. Augustine have been issued by the Newman Press. *The Greatness of Soul* owes its origin to various questions proposed to St. Augustine by his close friend, Evodius. Using the dialogue form, the Christian Platonist discusses the origin, the nature, and the greatness of the powers of the soul (the largest section), the union and separation of the soul and body. The influence of the Platonic philosophy is in evidence, but the work is predominantly the thoughts of a Christian philosopher and theologian. Adeodatus, the sixteen-year old son of Augustine, is responsible for the second essay, *The Teacher*. It is cast in the form of a dialogue and centers around the thesis, "that there is no teacher other than God who teaches man knowledge, which is also

in accord with what is written in the Gospel, 'One is your teacher, Christ' ". Father Colleran has given us a faithful and idiomatic version of these two small works, and has furnished copious notes that illustrate the text.

The seventh volume of *The Fathers of the Church* contains selections from the writings of four Fathers of the fourth and fifth century. Niceta of Remesiana was a great missionary of the Slavic nation and a personal friend of St. Paulinus, who composed several poems in his praise. Several of his instructions on Faith have been translated. Sulpicius Severus was born in Aquitaine and gained renown for his classic *Life of St. Martin of Tours*. This life of St. Martin together with several of Severus' dialogues are reprinted in this volume. Vincent of Lerins is the famous theologian quoted by Cardinal Newman, the Vatican Council, and in the encyclical against modernism. *The Commonitories* discusses the permanence of the doctrines of the Church throughout the ages. St. Prosper of Aquitaine is the author of the well known, *Grace and Free Will*, a defence of the teachings of St. Augustine against the attack of Cassian.

The City of God is one of the masterpieces of St. Augustine and a classic that belongs to the ages. In it the author continues his *Confessions*, which ends with a discussion of the creation of man. *The City of God* takes up the history of mankind and discovers that all men belong either to the City of God or the City of Man. The one works for the glory of God through a right-ordered contempt of self; the other city seeks the deification of man at the expense of the honor of God. St. Augustine furnished an outline for the interpretation of the philosophy of history. In a penetrating introduction, the noted scholar, Etienne Gilson, analyzes the content of this great book, and shows that it furnishes

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the clue for the only solid basis on which One World can be built—the union of all mankind in the pursuit of the same supernatural goal. Of the three works reviewed in this column, the *City of God* is easily the most important and one that should be read by every educated Catholic.

At first thought it would seem that these books of the early Christian writers should find their way only into the libraries of institutions and of scholars. But the ordinary lay Catholic would profit immensely by reading some of the writings of the Fathers of the Church. Surprising as it may seem, these books are not difficult reading. We are looking forward to the other volumes of these two editions.

Sunday Sermons

God and the Soul. By Rev. Henry Mohr.

Translated by Rev. F. J. Klemmer. 315 pp. St. Louis: B. Herder Co. \$4.00.

God and the Soul is a series of informal sermons dealing with the search of the soul of modern man for God. A theme appropriate to the Sunday Mass is presented in each essay. Interest is sustained by the use of a large number of stories. Unlike many sermon books, *God and the Soul* is a volume to be read, as well as a source book of ideas for the important Sunday sermon.

St. Therese of Lisieux

Storm of Glory. By John Beevers. 231 pp.

New York: Sheed and Ward. \$3.00.

John Beevers, an Englishman with the British Broadcasting Company, tells us that he wrote this life because, "I was sick to death of hearing St. Therese branded as the Little Flower and made the victim of a lot of sentimental gush". The author has accomplished his intention in the *Storm of Glory*, a simple narrative of her life and interpretation of her spirituality. The statement of his purpose might lead one to believe that he had written another modern "debunking" life of a Saint. But this is not the case. He shows St. Therese as a young woman whose soul found its goal in a simple form of spirituality. Some of her own childish language was used in a charitable spirit of accommodation to the spiritual perception of some individuals.

In recent years there has developed an immense amount of literature on St. Therese. Recently her *Collected Letters* and process of canonization have given new lights on the young Saint of Lisieux, and the author makes liberal use of these sources. The title is taken from a phrase of Pope Pius XII on the day after her canonization, "The storm, the deluge of glory which has descended upon Lisieux." Mr. Beevers has given a good portrait of St. Therese that will appeal to new and old friends of the great Saint.

BOOKS RECEIVED FOR REVIEW

AVE MARIA PRESS: *Concerning Mary Ann.* By Leo R. Ward, C.S.C.

BRUCE PUBLISHING CO.: *Murder Takes the Veil.* By Margaret Ann Hubbard.

GRAIL: *Saint Benedict the Man.* By Ryelandt-Shaughnessy; *The Holy Rule of St. Benedict.*

LIFETIME EDITIONS: *Roosevelt and the Will of God.* By Hugh Allen.

O'TOOLE: *Catholic Marriage Ritual.* By Callan and McHugh.

SHEED AND WARD: *WE Live With Our Eyes Open.* By Hubert Van Zeller. *Pov-erty.* By P. R. Regamey, O.P.; *Pilgrims of the Night.* By Edward E. Swanstrom.

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BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at
the University of Scranton, Scranton, Pa.

I. *Suitable for any Reader:*

The Quiet Light—*de Wohl*
The Little World of Don Camillo—
Guareschi
Tudor Underground—*Meadows*
The Song of the Cave—*Murphy*
Rise Up and Walk—*Walker*
The Little Princess—*Crawford*
The Wilderness is Yours—*Thurburn*
Reginald Pole—*Schenk*
How To Guess Your Age—*Ford*
Our Sovereign State—*Allen*
Swiftwater—*Annixter*
Innocents at Home—*Considine*
Storm of Time—*Dark*
Mr. Midshipman Hornblower—*Forester*
Gentian Hill—*Goudge*
Phantom Fortress—*Lancaster*
The Dishonest Murderer—*Lockridge*
Certainly, I'M a Catholic—*McDermott*
Overture to Overlord—*Morgan*
Jesuits for the Negro—*Reynolds*
The King's Cavalier—*Shellabarger*
The Mating Season—*Wodehouse*
The Romantic New Orleanians—*Tallant*
The Marx Brothers—*Crichton*
Medicine Could Be Verse—*Farnum*
No Postponement—*LaFarge*
A Measure of Freedom—*Forster*

II. *Suitable only for adults:*

A. *Because style and contents are too advanced for adolescents:*

Behind Closed Doors—*Zacharias*
The Cardinal—*Robinson*
The Legacy—*Shute*
Seeds of Treason—*de Toledano*
The Circle of the Day—*Howe*
Not By Any Single Man—*Knight*
Comes the Comrade—*Orme*
Mink on Weekdays—*Lampart*
Phoenix and Turtle—*Gilby*
Introduction to the History of Science
—*Sarton*
And Madly Teach—*Smith*

My Three Years in Moscow—*Smith*
The Police State—*Thompson*
The Wooden Horse—*Williams*
Home Sweet Zoo—*Barnes*
The Coming Defeat of Communism—
Burnham
The Strange Land—*Calmer*
The American Mind—*Commager*
The Country of the Blind—*Counts*
Imperial Renegade—*de Wohl*
The Wall—*Hersey*
Tarry Flynn—*Kavanaugh*
Mary O'Grady—*Lavin*
A Few Flowers for Shiner—*Llewellyn*
Each Bright River—*McNeilly*
The Merry Miracle—*Mian*
The Art of Real Happiness—*Peale*
Virginia Reel—*Gilbert*
Savage Gentlemen—*Gerson*

B. *Because of immoral incidents, which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:*

One Big Family—*Hale*
The Dead Stay Young—*Seghers*
Sunrise to Sunset—*Adams*
The Diplomat—*Aldridge*
Jubilee Trail—*Bristow*
The Horse's Mouth—*Cary*
The Dusty Godmother—*Foster*
The Hidden Hero—*Fauffmann*
Little Lost Boy—*Laski*
This Dark Monarchy—*Leary*
Dear Hollywood—*Lowell*
Love Story—*McKenney*
Morning Time—*O'Neill*
A Search for a King—*Vidal*
The Arch of Stairs—*Alderman*
The Bizarre Sisters—*Waltz, Jay and Audrey*
The Company of Men—*Gary*
Don Gaucho—*Pollock*

III. *Not recommended to any class of readers:*

Worlds in Collision—*Velikovsky*
Star Money—*Winsor*



Lucid Intervals

"You can't marry her without permission," said Father Smith.

"Why not?" said the swooning swain.

"Because she's a minor."

The young man looked stumped for a minute, then asked:

"You mean I gotta ask John L. Lewis?"

"Why do you go to college?"

"Because I feel so good when vacation time comes."

A fellow who lived in an isolated region went to the city for the first time and returned wearing a ring containing a huge stone. The jewelry dazzled the village belles and excited the envy of the other men, one of whom finally asked if it was a real diamond. "Waal, if it ain't," replied the wearer, "I've shore been skun out of four bits!"

"Mother what is a trousseau?" inquired a six-year-old. The mother looked across the room at her husband, who was hiding behind a paper, and said, "A trousseau is the clothes the bride wears for six or seven years after she is married."

The tall, dignified man joined the crowd in front of a bargain counter, in an attempt to get a very special pair of hose for his wife. He inched his way patiently, but was buffeted here and there by the women, and made no progress.

Suddenly he lowered his head, stretched out his arms, and barged through the crowd.

"Can't you act like a gentleman?" inquired a cold feminine voice at his elbow.

"I've been acting like a gentleman for the past hour," replied the man, still charging forward. "From now on I'm going to act like a lady."

City detective Floyd Niswonger got a straight answer to a straight question.

He asked a man picked up on suspicion of illegal entry into the United States:

"How did you get into this country?"

The man replied:

"Mister, I'm a full-blooded Sioux Indian, I was born here. How did you get here?"

"Is Jim a confirmed bachelor?"

"He is now. He sent his picture to a Lonely Hearts Club, and they sent it back with a note saying: 'We're not that lonely.'"

A mountaineer's wife sent her husband to the store to get some diapers for the new baby. He went to the store and handed over the price advertised.

The salesgirl said, "That will be ten cents for the tax."

"I don't want no tacks," he answered. "Bessie fastens 'em on with safety pins."

"Speaking of how people react to emergencies," says a friend, "I'll have to tell you about my genteel aunt in Boston."

"Late one night her house caught fire. Auntie dressed carefully, donned hat, coat and clean white gloves, and walked sedately out into the street, repeating in a soft, soft whisper: 'Fire . . . fire . . .'"

An Irishman and a Scotsman were passing a Catholic cathedral in Montreal. The Irishman removed his hat; the Scot did the same.

After they had passed, the Irishman said: "I thought you were a Presbyterian. I was glad to see you take your hat off when you passed the cathedral."

"Cathedrall!" said the Scotsman. "Mon, I thought it was the Bank of Montreal."